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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

No. 2

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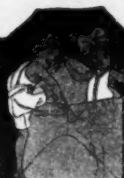


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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 31

MAY, 1920

Number 2

Making a Man of J. J.

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "Dreamers of Dreams," "The Wife of Asa Pincheon," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

Very likely you've known a young man of J. J.'s type. He isn't rare. But the pranks of fate and of love did something to him. You will find the story an absorbing one.

CHAPTER I.

YOU don't mind my mothering you a little?" There was a wealth of wistful tenderness in Mrs. Allison's voice as she punched the pillows in the corner of the broad davenport and indicated to J. J. that he was to make himself comfortable among them. "I'm nearly old enough to be your mother, anyway." Dark eyes, sparkling from a thicket of curling dark lashes, challenged him.

"A lot you are!" J. J., in duty bound, scoffed, as he obediently made his way to the chintz-covered comfort.

"But I am." She hovered about him, adjusting cushions. "There, squash this little one right in back of your neck. Isn't that comfy? Why, how old do you think I am?"

J. J.'s pulses beat a little unsteadily at the proximity of the lady's lovely hands, satiny-smooth, evanescently perfumed. It had been a long time since feminine lure had been exerted upon him. He recognized it, even in its disguise of patriotic "mothering."

"Twenty-five?" he hazarded politely.

"You ridiculous boy! Look at me." She had been fluttering about the

room out of his range of vision since the moment when she had allowed her fingers, in arranging the little pillow, to touch his cheek. She came back now and sat beside him, her glowing face turned toward him, the light from the rosy lamp at the end of the long davenport table falling flatteringly upon her.

"I can do that," grinned J. J. "You're easy to look at."

She raised her hand and made the threat of slapping him.

"I don't want pretty speeches, boy," she said, pouting, imperious. "I want the truth. Look at me and tell me how old you think I am. No more nonsense about my being twenty-five!"

J. J. looked. To a male of the species, it was, as he had intimated, not at all a difficult task. Of course, he had been merely talking nonsense when he had said twenty-five. He had thought of her, when he had accepted her invitation to dinner, delivered last Sunday when she had come back to the hospital with the load of convalescent officers whom she had been motoring, that she was old, perhaps forty. But staring at her now, according to command, he revised that judgment. There



"Oh, I'd like you to think me not a bad sort of fellow. I'd like you to think me — Oh, I guess you know what I want you to think about me," he ended hoarsely.

was not a thread of gray in her beautifully burnished, beautifully coifed, silky, dark hair. There was not a line upon her low brow. In the benignant light from the lamp behind them, the little fine lines that sunlight might have made observable about her sparkling eyes and laughing mouth were unseen. Her figure was slight as a girl's. It was charmingly arrayed in some sort of gauzy goods. J. J. had missed the

sartorial education that comes with the possession of sisters, and he did not know georgette, but he knew the stuff was deeply creamy in color, and accentuated here and there by unexpected little touches of coral pink.

"I'll make it twenty-six years and seven months," he told her, "and I won't raise it by so much as another week."

"Impudent boy, to be making fun of

an old woman!" Again her pretty hands struck out. J. J.'s fingers turned inward on his palms to keep from catching those provocative, white invitations to flirtation. Of course, he must be careful! She was older—she must be thirty-five, at least, thirty-five to his twenty-four. She could not really mean what she seemed to mean, and, by Jove, a fellow might get into trouble by making love to a staid, middle-aged lady who merely intended to do her bit for her country when she invited invalided young officers to her house.

The lady looked at him with a momentary cessation of allure. It was almost as though she were not altogether appreciative of his self-restraint. She weighed him with eyes that seemed older in their moment of calculation than they had seemed before. Then she appeared to shrug off her resentment—though 'resentment' is, perhaps, too strong a word for the feeling that her features had registered. She put the cigarettes close to his hand on a taboret, and murmured something about hurrying her maid with the liqueurs as she left the room for a minute.

J. J. struck a match with fingers that shook a little as she disappeared. He hadn't realized that it was going to be so difficult to keep all the good resolutions that had been so easy to make back there, where self-restraint and stern discipline had first demonstrated to him their rewards. The bulwark against temptation erected by fifteen months of effort to subdue appetites seemed as though it might give way before the current of twenty-three years of indulgence. But he wanted to remain firm. He wanted to do nothing to mar that record of his, that record of which he was so proud, that record of an achievement that was all his own. Nobody had helped him to the silver insignia on his khaki; nobody would have believed, two years ago, that he would ever win such insignia for him-

self. Those who had known him best would have prophesied that an intimate acquaintance with the guardhouse and perhaps with the interior of a Federal prison was likely to be his chief army experience. And yet, here he sat, a lieutenant, waiting only for a shattered rib to knit firmly again in order to go back and become a captain, a major—a vision of himself as an iron-jawed member of the general staff passed seductively before him! No exciting, debilitating, amorous nonsense for him, no matter what the lady meant!

There was a sound of tinkling glass. Mrs. Allison was returning and behind her stepped a neat-handed Phyllis with a silver tray loaded with cunning bottles and little glasses and a bowl of cracked ice.

"You were perfectly wonderful at dinner, holding out so firmly against my poor, innocuous, little glass of claret," said his hostess, her hand hovering above the liqueurs. "But you aren't going to refuse just a tiny Benedictine, or a mere thimbleful of chartreuse, are you? You mustn't forget that you are an invalid. The regulations don't apply to sick men, do they? Which will you have?"

J. J. shook his head with a smile. "Nothing at all, thank you." Then, as a swift little frown darkened her face and gave him again the impression of age which she had left with him on Sunday, he tried to temper her wrath.

"You think I'm an awful mollycoddle, don't you? But I'm not. I'm a regular fellow, really I am. The trouble is that I was too much of a regular fellow, once—an irregular fellow. Do you see? When all that is far enough behind me so that I am not afraid of it, will you let me come and drink a class of claret with you, and a thimbleful of Benedictine?"

He was really rather captivating in his boyish frankness as he made his confession and begged her leniency and

coöperation. But Mrs. Allison shrugged her shoulders, quite unmistakably and contemptuously this time.

"If it's your principle to run away from danger," she said, lighting a cigarette, "I congratulate your friends; they need not worry about you. However, if all our boys were like that, the war would take a good time to win, wouldn't it?" She seated herself in an armchair across the room. She yawned quite unmistakably. Poor J. J. blushed furiously under his tan and freckles. So that was how he appeared, was it? A coward? He did not like to have this pretty woman who had been so charming to him think of him as a coward. He did not like the obvious way in which she served notice upon him that he bored her stiff, that his sort of a man, of a soldier, bored her stiff. Of course, one tiny little drink would not start him off again! What was the least baneful of the liquids shining with many colors, topaz, brown, and green, on the tray? He cleared his throat, preparatory to saying that, after all, a little *crème de menthe* could not hurt him. But as he opened his lips to utter the words, a passing car, loaded, apparently, with boys and girls, rolled along the suburban streets, and the sound of their young voices raised in song was borne along the honeysucked air, across Mrs. Allison's lawn.

"One more river, there's one more river to cross."

The old camp-meeting tune came in to him. He straightened, stiffened. He was hanged if he would drink *crème de menthe* to reestablish himself in Mrs. Allison's good graces or anybody else's. There was always one more river to cross. Well, he was going to cross it, and not go splashing into it, merely because a pretty lady, who couldn't possibly understand anything about possession by the alcoholic demon, wanted to make mildly merry after dinner! So,

instead of reconsidering his refusal, he said:

"You don't really mean it, you know. You don't think I am a coward. Because, if you could think so, for such a reason, you'd be the sort of woman whose opinion wouldn't matter. And your opinion matters an awful lot to me."

She looked at him with a little flicker of surprise. The indignation which she had started to assume at his rebuke melted in amusement and appreciation of his final sally.

"So my opinion matters a lot to you, eh?" she said, smiling.

He nodded.

"A lot," he said, quite seriously.

"And this is the second time you have seen me." She mocked him. "Well, what do you want me to think of you?" She left the remote armchair and came back to the davenport. "What do you want me to think of you, boy?"

A pulse throbbed in J. J.'s throat. He thought how long it had been since he had felt a girl's hands in his, had kissed a woman's lips. He wanted intensely, suffocatingly, to hold Mrs. Allison's pretty hands, to kiss her inviting lips. But he had not imbibed the drop of alcohol that, for him, released reason from its guard upon impulse. So, instead of yielding to the momentary wave of desire, he said, a little thickly:

"Oh, I'd like you to think me not a bad sort of fellow. I'd like you to think me——" His verbal resourcefulness was dwindling. She drew nearer. The perfume of her hair and her satiny skin was in the air he breathed. "Oh, I guess you know what I want you to think about me," he ended hoarsely, and leaned toward her.

But a side encased in plaster of Paris may act almost as restrainingly, in certain moments, as an active Puritan conscience. J. J., despite his obvious intention, had not yet gathered his hostess into a strong, compelling, khaki em-



"And if you're planning to hang around to get anything out of your mother, let me tell you this—and her, let me tell her, too—that at the first suspicion that she's helping you I'll cut her off as completely as I'm cutting you!"

brace, when the door into the hall was flung roughly open, and a tall gentleman with upstanding reddish hair, strode violently in. At the sight of the entirely innocent tableau upon the davenport, he stopped short, and the dark ire of his glance gave place to bewilderment.

"Why, Phil!" cried Mrs. Allison, vivaciously. "I didn't expect you for hours yet. Lieutenant Robinson, this is my husband, Mr. Allison. Your office telephoned that you wouldn't be able

to get out until the twelve-fifty-seven, Phil."

"Glad to meet you, lieutenant," mumbled Mr. Allison. Then he turned to his wife. "I got through earlier than I expected. Couldn't get a quorum for the meeting, after all. Awful difficult work, getting a quorum for a directors' meeting in June, Lieutenant Robinson, with so many people away and all that." His eyes fell upon the tray, with the ice melting in the glass bowl, and both the little, silver-stemmed glasses guilt-

less of any trace of liqueur. He raised his eyebrows at his wife. She gave a barely perceptible shake of the head. "Well, well!" he said. "This seems to have been an abstemious party. Don't blame you, lieutenant. Don't care for this sirupy sort of stuff myself. Will you have a high ball? I've got some pretty good Irish out there in the side-board."

"Lieutenant Robinson doesn't drink at all, Phil," said Mrs. Allison clearly.

"Well, I dare say he's just as well off," admitted Mr. Allison indulgently. "But I think I'll go and get myself a little nightcap."

J. J. rose slowly. The panicky thankfulness he had felt because her husband's abrupt entrance had not discovered him embracing Mrs. Allison had given place to a sort of shrewd wonder at the closeness of the shave. It was, of course, abominable and low-minded of him to suspect that this charming lady, charmingly housed, charmingly gowned, prettily devoted to the service of her country's defenders, could be ever so remotely allied to the sisterhood versed in the methods of what J. J., in his unregenerate days, had known as the badger game. But—well, he thought he would go. He said so, and took his leave with all proper expressions of gratitude.

It was not a long walk from the Allison's house at the edge of Roseville to the Roseville Country Club, which was temporarily doing duty as a convalescent hospital for invalided officers. A half mile of winding, moonlit road lay between the two. It passed a meadow faintly misted now with fog rising from its damp bosom, a bit of a grove, and two or three houses surrounded by their walled gardens. J. J. stepped briskly along, alternately congratulating himself upon a danger escaped and berating himself as a low-lived, suspicious fool.

"If I'd played round with the right

sort of people these last few years," he said to himself, "I wouldn't get run away with by such notions. Nice, middle-aged ladies"—he had again decided upon Mrs. Allison's years as forty—"don't invite wounded lieutenants to dinner for the purpose of relieving them of their watches or their wads, or anything like that. It isn't done in refined circles. I suppose she did want to flirt a bit. I don't blame her with that plug-ugly of a husband! But I don't believe, after all, that she had it all fixed up with him to come in, in the thick of things, and to make me pay through the nose for my indiscretion. I simply don't believe it. I thought it simply because I sojourned too long in Hell's Kitchen before I went into the army."

He sighed sharply. His shoulders sagged. His step grew heavy.

"Too long," he repeated.

It was not only false ideas of life as it was lived in charming suburbs that he had brought away with him from that sojourn. It was something more tangible. It was something that made him drag his way along, when he remembered it, as a ball and chain upon his ankle might have made him drag.

"What a fool, what a fool!" he murmured again. Then, resolutely, he straightened his shoulders and swung into his stride. After all, the ball and chain had not kept him from making good!

Around a bend in the road he heard a scream, a woman's scream, inarticulate, frightened. He forgot the Circle with whom he had spent the evening. He ceased to speculate upon the sinister possibilities there might have been in her attempted enchantments. He forgot the ball and chain. He broke into a run. Around the curve he came upon a moonlit tableau. A girl in white was trying to struggle out of the clutch of a tall, white-flanneled young man. Her head was bent, and her captor was

trying vainly to raise it, with the evident intention of kissing her.

"Hi, you there!" cried J. J., speeding up his run. The white-flanneled young man dropped the girl's arms and turned in the direction of the rescuer. The girl, moaning a little, leaned backward upon the stone wall that separated the garden of a large house, in the background, from the roadway. The white-flanneled person did not, however, attempt his escape, as J. J. had rather expected him to. He stood his ground with admirable composure, and by the time the young officer was within normal speaking distance of them, he had lighted a cigarette as though to show how completely at his ease he was.

"This fellow is annoying you?" J. J. demanded of the girl. But the man himself took the answer out of her lips.

"A lover's spat," he announced nonchalantly. "You see, my dear," turning again to the girl, "what misconceptions your coyness gives rise to. Thank the gentleman for his kind intentions and allow me to continue taking you home."

J. J. stared at the girl questioningly. There was something familiar to him in her appearance, but in the excitement of the moment he could not place her. It was not until she spoke that he knew her for one of the singers at a concert which the ladies of Roseville had given at the hospital the week before. Her voice, even her speaking voice, was unforgettable. It was deep, mellow, rather sad. It had impressed him when she had made her announcement of the group of little Scotch songs she was to sing. She spoke now gaspingly.

"There is not a word of truth in what this man says," she announced, turning to J. J. "He is annoying me."

"Margaret, how can you!" exclaimed the white-flanneled person. "You will hardly go so far as to deny that you know me?"

"It is immaterial to me," declared J. J. sharply, "whether the lady knows you or not, whether you are engaged to her, or married to her, for that matter, or not. You were annoying her and I'll give you just one minute to clear out." Then, he turned to the girl. "You will let me take you home?" he said. He forgot, for the moment, the plaster casing, but fortunately the young man did not put his fistic ability to the test.

"Thank you. I shall be much obliged." She had recovered her courage by this time and stood erect, a rather gallant figure in the moonlight against the background of Rambler-covered stone wall.

"Dear, dear!" sighed the white-flanneled person in mock despair. "How the military does cut in on one! And to think that it was only because I wanted to take you home myself that you threw such a noisy fit, Margaret! Well, I'm not one to stay and spoil sport. But some day, when he knows all—dear, dear!"

"Will you be off?" cried J. J., threateningly. The young man made no other answer than to vault the stone wall with considerable agility and grace, and to disappear in the thick shrubbery on the other side.

"Does he live there?" asked J. J.

The girl whom he had called Margaret said that he did.

"I really am not afraid any longer. He will not bother me again. He wouldn't have done it to-night, I am quite sure, except that he was drinking." J. J. breathed a devout thanksgiving for the abstinence that had controlled him that night, but he declined to be released from his escort of the girl. It developed that she lived two or three houses back along the road which he had come. They turned and walked along together. J. J. spoke of the concert of the week before, where she had been one of the singers.

It was a very big house into the driveway of which they finally turned. J. J. was a little astonished that the daughter of so imposing an establishment should be wandering about the roads of Roseville without any attendant so late in the evening. He spoke of the dangers of such exercise. What with stray soldiers and the large influx of all sorts of rough men into the neighborhood, from a munitions plant hastily run up in the marshes, he was inclined to think that she was very rash, he said, to stroll about so casually.

"And you mustn't judge even the man who was bothering me"—she hesitated and seemed to have difficulty in picking the right words—"too hardly. I am sure, as I told you, he would not have done it except that he had been drinking, and besides—well, besides, it was partly my fault."



And it was then that J. J., very maudlin, had leaned across the table, had taken her brilliantly manicured little hand in his own, and had told her that he would marry her.

Margaret—it appeared that her name was Margaret Shreve—rather heatedly defended the rough population of which he spoke. She was accustomed, she said, to roam at all hours about the countryside, and from the men from the class he mentioned she had never received anything but courtesy and human friendliness.

She said the last words in a very low tone. J. J. found himself thrilled by the suggestion of intimacy, of understanding, which they implied.

"I don't believe a word of it," he said vigorously. "It doesn't make any difference what right a man may think a woman has given him, he's nothing better than a thug if he tries to—to—"

His vocabulary seemed suddenly inadequate for the idea with which he struggled. "Oh, you know what I mean."

"I never gave him any right!" cried the girl in passionate protest.

"Of course you didn't," said J. J. soothingly. "I only meant that even if you had, even if any woman had——" Again he floundered.

They had reached the stone steps that led in a short flight to the wide veranda of the stone-and-timber house. Miss Shreve gave him her hand. Her face, seen in the brilliant glow of the porch light, was an earnest one. J. J., albeit not given to the finer and more subtle sorts of analysis, could not help thinking what different effects were producible by eyes whose description, thanks to the inadequacy of language, must read very similarly. For Miss Shreve's eyes were, like Mrs. Allison's, dark and brilliant. Like the older woman's, they were beautifully shaded by thick, dark lashes. But whereas the eyes of his hostess had beckoned invitations to lawlessness, those of the young lady, whose escort he unexpectedly found himself, seemed to invite to martyrdom, or at any rate to lofty endeavor.

J. J. was not yet enough of a self-analyst to weigh the meaning of the fact that Miss Shreve's eyes thrilled him far more potently than Mrs. Allison's.

"Are any of you kind ladies coming soon again to the hospital to sing to us?" he asked her, as they stood for a moment outside the door. "That is, are *you* coming? I like those Scotch songs you sang. I haven't heard them since—oh, not for years now." He ended a little gruffly.

"I'm coming over with an accompanist and another singer to-morrow evening," answered Margaret. "I'm glad you liked the Scotch songs. If you think the others liked them, too, I'll do them again, or some of them,

at any rate. Good night, lieutenant—I'm sorry, I forget what you said your name was."

J. J. supplied it, and went off down the long, winding, blue-stone drive, between the rhododendrons, in a tingle of pleasant emotion. If it had been a long time since he had felt a woman's hands in his, or kissed a woman's lips, as it had seemed to him back there beneath Mrs. Allison's rosy lamp, it had been longer yet since he had talked to a girl like Margaret Shreve. He found himself humming the air of one of the songs she had sung the other night.

"Yestreen, the Queen had four Marys.
To-night she'll hae but three——"

He broke off abruptly. He found himself choking. And, oh, the weight of the ball and chain as he went on back to the hospital!

CHAPTER II.

Some twenty-four years before the night when Lieutenant J. J. Robinson had resisted temptation in the person of Mrs. Allison, and some twenty-two years and ten months before he had placed the ball and chain firmly upon his feet, there had been great rejoicing in the Angus Robinson home in Seattle over his advent into the world. It had coincided most agreeably with the assured beginning of the Robinsons' good fortune. After many rough years in lumber camps and lumber mills, Angus had found himself an employer instead of an employee, an owner instead of a laborer, a budding oppressor of the workingman instead of one of the oppressed. He was already thirty-eight when the desirable transformation was effected, and Jessie, his wife, was only a year younger. They rejoiced over young J. J.—John Jeremiah, after his two grandfathers—with extreme rejoicing.

"He'll never have to go through what we've been through, Jessie," Angus had

declared. "We can raise him like a little prince."

"A bonnie little prince," Jessie had crooned, looking adoringly upon the round pink face of her son.

Whereupon they had begun to raise J. J. like a little prince. They were as foolish as only two middle-aged people with a single child can succeed in being. They were as extravagant as only people newly come into riches can possibly be. For years they spent their time in trying to think of possessions which would give the young heir pleasure, before he could think of them for himself. Jessie invested heavily in velvet blouses and lace collars for the little boy. Angus was liberal with ponies and dogs. Nurse after nurse was dismissed because she tried to instill some idea of obedience into young J. J.'s curly head. Later, a stream of governesses was constantly arriving at and departing from the big mansion which Angus erected for himself in Seattle. By and by schools were as frequently changed.

Both parents adored the little boy, and each had an individual method of spoiling him. Jessie pampered him with gifts, with sweetmeats, with rich apparel. She never punished, merely sometimes promised punishment. Angus began to make him manly before he was out of kilts. Manliness, as the lumberman interpreted that quality, consisted chiefly in a readiness to fight at the drop of a hat or even sooner. He used to make up little purses for the boys of the neighborhood to wrestle or box for, and thereby he gained great unpopularity among the neighborhood mothers. He used to take little J. J. off with him when he went to inspect his properties. Before the boy was eight he had a rare vocabulary of profanity, acquired from the lumbermen of many nationalities who worked for Angus and his corporations. The men thought it highly amusing to hear oaths

lisped in a childish treble. Later they regarded it as highly diverting to see him tipsy.

By the time J. J. was twelve he was an obnoxious little ruffian, concerning whom his father was beginning to ask: "How can he possibly be what he is, with all the advantages he has had?" He decided that he had been too lenient with the boy and he began to discipline him. He denied him now in the same wholesale and unreasoning way in which he had formerly indulged him. Jessie, who stood in wholesome awe of her lord, attempted furtively to offset his harshness to the boy. J. J. "worked" her with a good deal of skill.

When he was fourteen, he was dismissed from three schools in one season. Jessie lamented that the masters did not understand her darling, opined that they were snobs who had it in for the boy because his father was a self-made man, and surreptitiously tried to make up to him for the injustice under which he suffered. Angus, on the other hand, decided that the boy was a rotter, and took advantage of a lax child-labor law to send him into the woods for a season of work.

"That'll knock the nonsense out of him!" he said grimly.

In the woods, under able tutelage, J. J.'s education was carried forward surprisingly. He copied the vices of the men by whom he was surrounded and, with the precocity of youth, bettered his tutors in some. He could drink and smoke, chew and swear, with the most hardy of them by the end of the season. His language was susceptible of such flights as would have sent a respectable woman and a great many respectable men, for that matter, scurrying into the innermost asylum of their homes to lock the door and to tremble at the remembrance. Along with these accomplishments he had become adept in the art of shirking. He knew that he was the owner's son. He did not



She came out upon the veranda where the reading was in progress, a vision to inspire health and energy in any one, no matter how disabled.

believe that he would ever be really obliged to work for his living. Or, more likely, he did not think in these terms at all, but merely said to himself, more boyishly: "Aw, my dad pays his wages. He can't boss me!"

Having thus failed to "knock the nonsense" out of J. J. by such means as had seemed to him infallible, Angus passed the problem on to various high-priced schools and summer camps

for solution. The experiments generally opened auspiciously. Head masters and camp directors, diplomatically warned that the boy needed a good deal of discipline, were usually perfectly willing to undertake the job of giving it to him. Their first interviews with him were generally satisfactory. J. J. had a winning manner when he felt like exerting it, and he usually went to these conferences in a penitent state of

mind, after a tearful interview with Jessie, whom he really hated to hurt, whom he would, indeed, have been glad to please if the task had not always entailed something more positive on his part than mere kindly feeling.

J. J. was, too, as Angus, bewildered, despairing, and yet half proud, used to say, "nobody's fool." He could learn anything he put his mind to and the first two or three weeks in any new school usually convinced the masters that all their predecessors had been dullards without tact in appealing to a lively, boyish nature. Another month usually landed J. J. at home on the charge of insubordination, laziness, rowdiness, and the corruption of the rest of the school.

In the days when Jessie and Angus had leaned above J. J.'s cradle and had talked of raising him like a little prince, there had always been a vision in Jessie's eyes which she did not confide even to her husband. It was founded upon a fairly extensive course of novel reading and upon the recollection of the coming-of-age festivities of a titled young man in the place where she had been born. That had been before her people had come out to America, of course, and they had been among the tenantry invited to help celebrate the young lord's majority. It had always remained in her mind as the symbol of everything magnificent, beautiful, and gay.

After Angus had begun to make money and to grow into a rich man, she used to dream of such a coming-of-age for J. J. She had never been quite sure where the tenantry would be acquired. Angus' employees in the lumber camps certainly did not lend themselves to the part. But, somehow, a pageant like the vividly remembered one was to be evolved to mark little J. J.'s entrance into manhood. Of all the disillusiones and disappointments which the poor woman ever suffered

that which befell her on her son's twenty-first birthday was the most bitter. She had always, in the depths of her heart, cherished the belief that a miracle must happen and that her dream must come true.

Of course, he had been "wild"—what boy of spirit isn't? Thus Jessie's hopes had been wont to speak to her. Of course, he drank a little more than was good for him, but then Angus himself was not without guilt in this particular, and no one would deny that Angus was a good man, a good husband, a fine citizen. Of course, he had drawn upon his father after his father had forbidden the practice, but didn't the boy know that the money was all to be his some day? It wasn't dishonesty! And Angus should have given him an adequate allowance, anyway, and then the ugly situation might never have arisen. Of course, he had been arrested for speeding, for brawling, but one of the offenses, at least, was in perfectly good social standing, and as for the other—oh, probably J. J. was a little quick-tempered; but Angus was the last person in the world to find fault with him on that score, since it was Angus who had first taught him to clinch his baby fists into a little weapon of offense.

Thus she had always managed to justify, or to excuse, the boy in her own heart. And, since God, she was quite sure, must be at least as understanding as a mother, thus He, too, must surely excuse and justify the boy! And the miracle would be wrought on J. J.'s majority. Everything that had gone before was mere boyishness. On that day, he would put aside childish things, and they could rejoice over the man he was to make.

Instead of which, that was the day chosen by Angus for the formal, the almost Mosaic renunciation of his son. There had been a thundercloud upon the old man's brow when he opened



"Oh," said J. J., "you know that I'm crazy about you, don't you? Of course you know it!"

his mail at his early breakfast. Looking up from a letter, he had demanded to know where J. J. was. Jessie had fluttered that she thought he had been out late the night before, that she hadn't liked to have him wakened, that she—then the whole feeble barricade she tried to erect against the father's anger went down in a crash. Angus interrupted her, spoke to the maid who was serving them.

"Send upstairs and have Mr. J. J. wakened," he thundered. "Tell him to be here in five minutes."

There was something so potent in his

command that even the indirectness of its conveyance to J. J. did not destroy its quality. Blinking, unshorn, a little pale, partly from fear of his father and partly from the strong liquors of his consumption the night before, J. J. had made his appearance within the specified time. He wore a gorgeous brocade robe, and he came puffing a cigarette.

"Go out of the room, you," said old Angus to the maid. "Shut the door after you and don't come back till I ring for you."

"Morning, mater," said J. J., not

venturing upon a greeting to his irate sire. "What's all the row?"

Angus enlightened him in a few minutes. Jessie sat with bent head and trembling lips while the list of follies and shames was recounted. She heard things, people, women, called by their horrible Biblical names.

"You're twenty-one years old today," said Angus finally. Jessie's sad heart, that had seemed to her almost to have ceased to beat, stirred a little. So her husband had remembered, too! Poor Angus! "You're a man, and by God, sir, you'll do a man's work in the world from this hour henceforth, or you'll die a man's death. It's all one to me. I'm through with you! Your mother's through with you!" He cast upon her a look imperious, dreadful, forbidding answer, and the quick up-raising of her head, the quick parting of her lips, were stayed. She could not protest, she could not deny. She could not flash a look of reassurance to her boy, her baby!

But he, for his part, was not looking at her. All his faculties were tensely concentrated upon his father. He knew that the threatened hour had finally come. He had never believed that it would come, but he recognized it when at last it arrived. His father was casting him off! His father! And, surprisingly enough, the thing that hurt him unbearably was not his disinheritance from material things, it was his disinheritance from his father's affection. He did not analyze it then; he never analyzed it fully. But for a long time afterward he went about with a protest in his heart, and the words of that protest were: "And I always thought *him* the finest ever, even when he was ragging me the worst!"

"You'll never amount to anything, I know that well enough," said the old man grimly. "You are not worth the pains your mother bore to get you into the world you're a disgrace to. You'll

always be a loafer, but you won't be a wealthy loafer any longer. You'll always be a drunkard, but you'll get drunk on no more vintage wines. You'll leave this house to-day. You're never to return to it, never! If you do, I'll give you in charge to the policeman on the corner as a vagrant, a thief. I'll never honor another draft of yours, so you needn't take the trouble to draw any. I'll pay this last bill"—he pounded the communication lying before him on the breakfast table—"and any others you've contracted. You can let me have the list of them and the proof of them—for I won't be gulled—at my office by twelve o'clock. I'll settle them and I'll give you a thousand dollars. It's the last cent you'll ever have from me. Make no mistake about that. If I were to drop dead two hours from now you'd not be the gainer, for by that time my will will be changed. If you had the makings of a man in you, you'd need no more capital than that thousand to begin life on. It's a thousand dollars more than I started with. But you haven't—I'd be in my dotage to think it. And if you're planning to hang around to get anything out of your mother, let me tell you this—and her, let me tell her, too—that at the first suspicion that she's helping you I'll cut her off as completely as I'm cutting you. Do you understand me, sir?"

J. J.'s fingers had shaken as he tried to roll a cigarette. His voice was not quite under control when he essayed to answer. But he managed to jerk the words out:

"I'm not deaf, and there wasn't anything so damned subtle about what you had to say that I couldn't grasp it."

"Very well, then. Be at my office before twelve."

Before J. J. went away, his mother had tried to induce him to take some of her jewelry. Angus did not believe in allowing women to handle that dan-

gerous explosive, money, so that Jessie never had any. She had been touched and cheered, out of all proportion to the significance of the act, by J. J.'s refusal of it. She saw him restored to the self-respecting world that works and pays its bills and gets ahead, when he, with a jerky laugh, pressed the leather case back into her hand, and said:

"I'm going to be buying diamonds for you, old lady, before the end of the chapter, not taking them from you."

"But just to help you start," she had begged him, "just in the beginning."

It was the first time that he ever refused any gift, any sacrifice of hers. How she was enheartened by it!

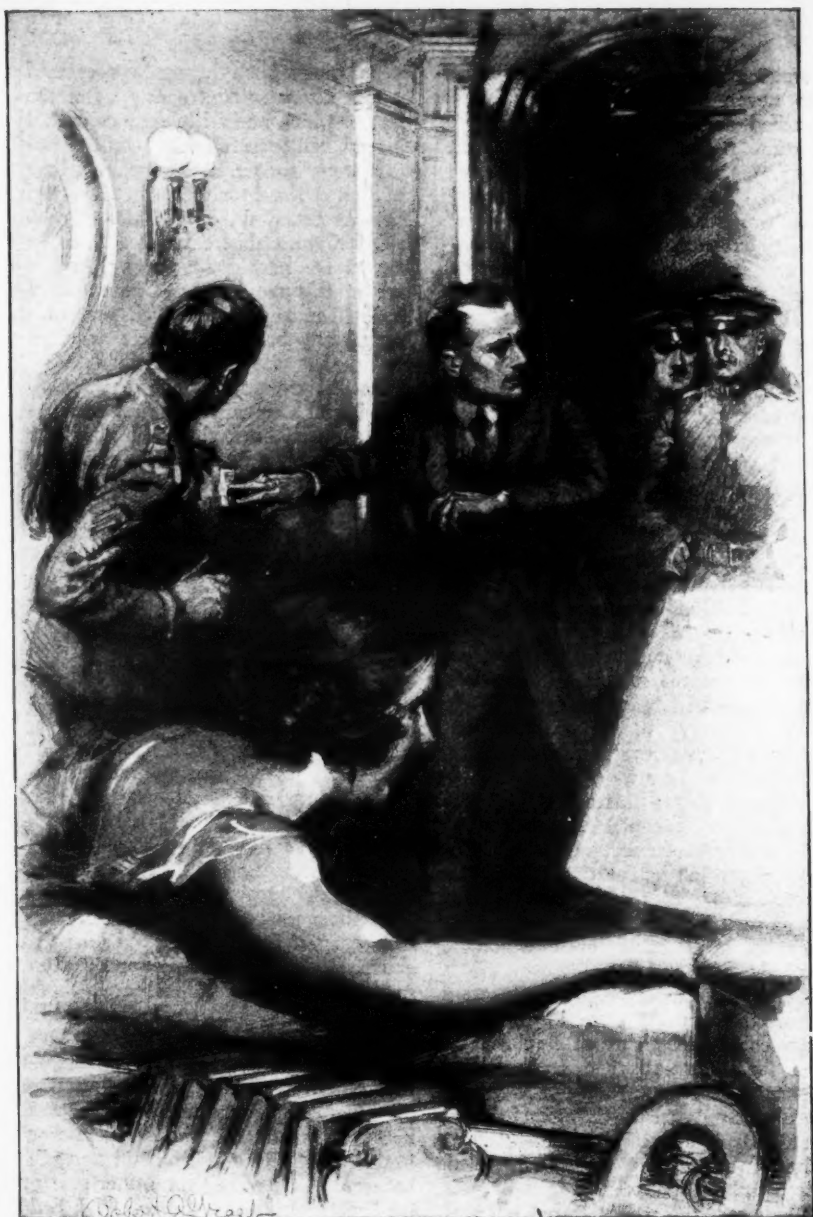
The thousand dollars with which J. J. had begun his independent career had lasted, despite his good intentions, a little less than a week. He parted from the final shreds of it in Chicago in a gambling house. And then began such a declension as made his former career seem almost respectable. In the first place there had been drink. J. J. had always flattered himself hitherto that he could "take it or leave it alone." The fact that he always took it seemed to him entirely a matter of free will, of a deliberate choice of conviviality, with the perfect willingness to pay the next day's bill of headache and languor. Now, to his surprise, it was borne in upon him that he seemed unable to keep sober even when he wished!

He worked occasionally. This was a period when any man with a strong body could find plenty of employment, and from time to time J. J. availed himself of his opportunities. When he had accumulated a little capital, he would drift out of the establishment employing him, and on. He traveled, for a little while, with a friendly pair of hoboes. He was arrested once or twice for drunkenness, and once or twice for vagrancy. He reached the

point where such happenings seemed to him normal. And finally, after the papers, which he had long since ceased to read, had been full for a while of debate upon conscription, the new law reached out and took him into keeping. He was found fit, despite the way he had for years abused his health, to be one of the new draft army. And it was at this moment that he acquired the ball and chain to which reference has already been made. He acquired Sadie. The way of it was this:

On the evening before he was to travel with a squad to his first encampment he had been sitting in the back room of a New York saloon, drinking, and talking to Sadie. He had known her for a week. He had known her very well for four days. She was not a particularly attractive young person, but to J. J., who had been more than half-seas over during the whole week, that detail was not especially important. She was not hopelessly ugly and she had allowed him to talk of himself by the hour. But on the night before the day he was due to report at camp, Sadie was moved to talk a little about herself. She had been grieved and indignant over his acceptance for the army. It was a shame, she said, that all the strong young men should be taken for a dirty job like that. Why didn't the old geezers who wanted wars fight them themselves?

And apart from the general unrighteousness, she was awfully fond of him in particular; she couldn't bear to think of what might happen to him. He might imagine, from the way she got to know him and—and everything—that she was careless about how she picked up acquaintances; but she gave him her word that there had never been any one just like him in her life before. There were tears in her greenish-hazel eyes as she said so. J. J. had leaned across the table and mopped them with his handkerchief.



176 The ireful Mr. Allison flooded the room with light and with profanity at the same second.

It was going to be awfully difficult, Sadie prophesied gloomily, for a girl to keep any kind of standards if these wars were to be allowed to continue. That very day she had lost her job in the manicure shop where she worked. Manicuring was going out. The women were all so deep in war work that they had no time to give to their fingers. Well, it didn't matter much what became of a girl like her, anyway! Nobody was interested in her; she wasn't even much interested in herself! And it was then that J. J., very maudlin, had leaned across the table, had taken her brilliantly manicured little hand in his own, and had told her that he would marry her.

He was quite honest with her about his feelings. He explained to her that if there had been any chance of his living, he probably wouldn't have married her. But he felt a premonition, he said, that he was "going to get his" in the war. He was going out—what was it they called it?—"going west." He knew that he was "going west." If he had been going to live, he had intended to make a success of life, the kind of success into which she would not fit; he must be honest with her, he asseverated, and let her know that. But he was going to fight; he was going to die. He had not lived very satisfactorily, very nobly, but, by gad, he could do something satisfactory, something noble, before leaving the world. He could help another victim of life's injustice. He, who had never done anything for himself, could do something for her! With the allotment from his pay which she, as his wife, would receive as long as he lived, and with the insurance which would begin to come in as soon as he had paid his final debt to a country which had never done very much for him, as far as he could see, she could live straight.

Sadie, in a voice choking with emotion, had called him the noblest fellow

she had ever seen—the very whitest! He wasn't going to be killed, she assured him, and then she checked herself hastily. She seemed to remember that J. J. had made their marriage contingent upon his certainty of death. But J. J. was in no condition to notice her misstep and its correction.

She saw to it, rather cleverly, that her suitor's inebriety remained at exactly the same mellow, sentimental, but not disabling point, during the next ten hours. They were among the earliest callers at the marriage-license bureau the next morning. J. J. had a mild, rather remote interest in learning her last name, as she signed the application. Sadie Mears it was. Armed with the license to wed, they had gone through the corridor and up or down some stairs into the office of an obliging alderman, duly commissioned to unite in matrimony. Then J. J. had betaken himself to the armory whence he was to be convoyed to a training camp. The farther he withdrew from Sadie the more necessary it became for him to fasten his mind firmly upon his nobility. There were moments when it looked to him like the most monumental folly. And the agreeable certainty of dying a hero's death was by no means so strong when the final influence of the potations of the Entente Café had worn off.

Every day of his training had made that inebriate's vision of himself less and less compelling. Indeed, as the first discipline he had ever experienced in his life began to bring out the latent abilities and virtues in the young man, it was only the recollection of Sadie that made a hero's death seem in the least desirable. Except for her, a hero's life would have been so much more to his liking. He used to indulge himself in crude, boyish dreams of greatness. He pictured his father and mother reading in the day's dispatches of splendid feats of gallantry

and skill performed by Captain J. J. Robinson's company, by Major J. J. Robinson's battalion, even by Colonel J. J. Robinson's regiment. He used to decimate the army of its line officers in order to advance his own rank quickly enough to satisfy his new ambitions. Yet he was tremendously, humbly satisfied when he achieved a corporality.

He held long, imaginary conversations with old Angus, pointing out to that thoroughly contrite parent how mistaken had been his judgment of his son. At times he was on the verge of writing home, of writing to his mother and telling her how the United States army was juster in its appreciations of a man's qualities than his own family. But he never quite brought himself to do it. His father's contempt, his father's apparent hatred of him had cut him to the quick.

Throughout his indolent, noisy, wasted boyhood, he had always rested secure in the belief of boundless parental affection. All the sound and fury of Angus' reproofs and punishments had represented to the boy only a letting off of steam, until the final day had come. That had knocked the immaterial, as well as the material props from beneath J. J. He could not write home! His father might think that he was hoping for reinstatement in that blasted will of his! And after J. J. had discovered in himself the power to earn a rising thirty dollars a month, regularly, honorably, by his own exertions, he felt a joyous contempt for his father's millions. No, when they met again it must be as man and man, not as impeccable sire and prodigal scion!

Besides, there was Sadie. To announce Sadie and a corporality—even a sergeancy, when that came in due course—in the same letter, would be, he felt, to announce two mutually destructive facts, putting it even at its most hopeful. For his people, Sadie

could nullify any title within the gift of the military life, he knew very well.

But not even the recollection of his wife could destroy all his pride and pleasure in the new man he was discovering in himself. Behold, he had brains! His superiors expected intelligence, promptness from him, as well as mere obedience. He wasn't merely that "rich little rotter, old Robinson's son," as he had heard himself described at home. He began to enjoy the new J. J. with whom the army made him acquainted. He began to take an almost pathetic pleasure in that J. J.'s record, so unlike his old one. Not for worlds would he do anything to mar it, to dim its luster.

And then across such moods as these, of happy pride and high determination, there would come, perhaps, a letter from Sadie, weak in spelling, but strong in perfume, in asseverations of affection, and in suggestion that a soldier's allotment to his wife did not go far in civil life. He used to long for the solace of a drink at such times, but even when the rare opportunity offered, he did not take advantage of it. Instead he squeezed a dollar or two out of his share of his pay, and sent it on. By and by the letters came less frequently, and after he crossed to France he received none at all. But the girl was with him more than ever. The farther he advanced along the road of self-control and self-respect, the more depressing became the remembrance of his act of maudlin folly. He thought, of course, of the ease with which divorce was procurable in his native land. But he knew he could never get home to Angus and Jessie by way of the divorce court. And then, too, along with increasing belief in himself, there grew up also in him, little by little, its concomitant, a conscience. He had said—drunkenly, to be sure, but earnestly—that he was marrying Sadie to take her off the streets. Suppose that

she had believed him! Suppose that her salvation was bound up in his fidelity to his drunken promise!

It was no wonder that, if Lieutenant J. J. Robinson had not been increasingly enamored of a life in which he could prove himself, he would have welcomed, as a happy issue out of his mental perplexities, the hero's death of which he had talked. And, indeed, when he first came to in the base hospital, after receiving a charge of shrapnel in his side, his thought was that it was rather a mistake to be alive, after all, when dying was such a simple, swift matter.

He had sent no message of his return home to the last address of his very migratory bride. He didn't want his invalided fellow officers to see Sadie, for one thing. And, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he supposed he would be sent back, and perhaps the next time he might make a complete job of it. Sadie had paid no attention to the notification of his serious wound, which she must have received from the war department. He had given her name, somewhat reluctantly, as his next of kin. Her omission was a relief to him. He was devoutly glad that pay allotments were made automatically and that he was not obliged to communicate with her to learn that she was receiving them.

As he walked back to the Roseville Country Club after his adventurous evening with the Circean Mrs. Allison, and the damsel in distress, Miss Shreve, he was more horribly, poignantly aware of Sadie than he had been for months. And yet, as he made himself ready for bed, he was humming a tune which poor Sadie, it is safe to say, had never heard in her life. It was a Scotch tune that his mother had used to hum in his little boyhood and that Margaret Shreve had sung the other night.

"Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green
braes——"

What lovely eyes that girl had! What a lovely voice! How wonderful it would be to some happy man to see those eyes turn lovingly toward him while she sat at the piano and sang him tender little Scotch ballads—some happy man who had never been a wastrel, who had never clamped firmly upon his foot a prisoner's ball and chain named Sadie!

CHAPTER III.

The hospital at Roseville was undermanned with nurses, and it was the patriotic custom of the ladies of the community to help out the shortage in such ways as their talents permitted. Consequently, two days after his exciting evening, Lieutenant Robinson found himself listening to Margaret Shreve as she read a story to him and to a companion officer whose eyes had not yet entirely recovered from the effects of a gassing.

J. J. had not been so well after his evening at Mrs. Allison's dinner as before. He developed unexpected pains and a temperature during the night. The next morning the surgeon on his rounds was inclined to be a little severe with him. They didn't like convalescents on the high road to recovery to develop setbacks at Roseville. He demanded rather crossly the name of J. J.'s hostess of the night before and the items of the banquet. J. J. was sincerely grateful for his abstinence when the great man frowned at him from above bushy gray eyebrows and said: "Nothing to drink, eh, nothing at all?"

And, after all, it had proved to be some imperfection in the knitting of his fractured rib that had developed the aches and pains which suspicion had been inclined to lay at the door of Mrs. Allison's entertainment, and the temperature abated with the recedence of the emotions which that lady had aroused.

J. J. had been profoundly disgusted with himself. Delay in convalescence meant delay in returning to France, delay in advancing along the road of glory to the point where he could greet his father as an equal. It meant, more immediately, a delay in getting out to see Margaret Shreve. And when he discovered that she came every Thursday afternoon to read to such of the patients as were not using their own eyes, he prudently decided that he must take better care of his than had been his custom, and he joined the ranks of those to whom she read. It was wonderful, he decided, that her speaking voice should be as beautiful, as thrilling, as her singing voice.

Mrs. Allison chose the same afternoon to make a little visit of cheer. She came out upon the veranda where the reading was in progress, a vision to inspire health and energy in any one, no matter how disabled. She was dressed in white and was almost hidden behind the armful of scarlet peonies which she carried and with which she filled a veranda jar. She radiated vitality, gayety. The men, most of them, were very obviously glad to see her. Two or three—they happened to be two or three who had enjoyed hospitality at her home—seemed a little sheepish, and withdrew from her brilliant neighborhood after awkward greetings. J. J. felt no sheepishness, thanks to his Spartan self-restraint of the other evening, but he felt annoyance at the interruption when she bore down upon his corner and spoke to Margaret Shreve intimately, fondly, and to him with motherly solicitude.

"This girl's simply going to kill herself with war work," she gravely assured the present beneficiaries of Miss Shreve's zeal. "I believe she sits up all night to knit socks. And her afternoons, every one of them, are full of surgical dressings or Red Cross pajamas or soldiers' readings or some-

thing. Why don't you go home and take a rest, you tired girl, you? I'll finish the story if these boys will take me as a substitute. You're looking horribly fagged."

"I'm not tired at all," declared Margaret, although, as a matter of fact, she did look very pale. "I don't do any more than any one else, or half that I ought to do."

"If you didn't do a thing except release Mr. and Mrs. Greenbaum, you'd be doing enough," declared Mrs. Allison energetically. She went on to explain to the young soldiers: "Mr. Greenbaum is one of the dollar-a-year men in Washington. Mrs. Greenbaum is one of the Women's League Motor Corps officers. There are paragraphs, pages, in our Roseville paper about them and their patriotic sacrifices. The pages ought to be about this girl here. If she didn't stay on the job at home and run their establishment and bring up their children and manage their servants, they couldn't be spreading themselves all over the country and having the time of their lives!"

"Mr. Greenbaum?" J. J. repeated the name rather puzzledly.

"Mrs. Allison only means that I am governess at the Greenbaums," explained Margaret briefly. "And as I have been there five years, it is natural that Mrs. Greenbaum should leave things more or less to me, now that she is so busy herself."

A feeling, warm and sweet, contented, hopeful, stole through J. J.'s frame. Forgetting Sadie for the moment, he rejoiced that Miss Shreve was an employee and not a daughter of the ornate suburban mansion to which he had brought her home the other night. It wouldn't be, perhaps, such a hopeless piece of cheek for a penniless prodigal like him—and then he remembered Sadie.

Mrs. Allison had effectively broken up the reading, and by and by Mar-

garet, smiling a smile that lightened a face far too serious and noble to be called pretty, and not quite regular enough to be beautiful, took her leave. Mrs. Allison looked after her departing figure with indulgent, half-amused, wholly sophisticated eyes.

"Poor dear!" she said. "She has made it quite her own war!"

Something in her observation, in her whole attitude, grated upon J. J. His companion in the corner laughed appreciatively, as though at a jest understood, and by and by wandered away, leaving Mrs. Allison in control of that end of the veranda.

"We're awfully funny creatures, we women," his visitor confided to J. J. with an air of sweet candor. She had produced the inevitable yarn and her needles were flashing in the light. Her eyes were upon her work, and J. J. could not tell what expression her lowered lids concealed.

"Are you?" he answered with an indifference a little too blunt to be courteous. But she did not notice his rudeness.

"Um, hum," she nodded wisely. "Now there is Miss Shreve, an awfully fine girl in so many ways. Don't you think she seems it?" She raised her eyes suddenly and surprised upon J. J.'s tanned cheek a blush of which he was so ashamed that he blushed the more deeply. "An awfully fine girl," she went on, resuming the study of her stitches. "Astonishingly well educated, and all that sort of thing. I always feel what an ignorant lowbrow I am, when I am with her. Conscientious, devoted—oh, really quite a wonderful girl. Roseville is a horrible, gossipy little place—you know how gossipy little places are. I never did before, because I never lived in one. But no matter how much Roseville frowned upon her and upon the little affair that gave rise to the gossip about her, of course it can't refuse her her share

in war work! She's come back by way of the war. I suppose a lot of women have. Maybe men, too."

"Come back?" J. J. hadn't wanted to ask the question for which Mrs. Allison made an obliging pause. He had meant all through her catty little monologue of innuendo, not to ask her what she was talking about. But he heard the words issuing, rather hoarsely and quite without his volition, from his lips.

"Yes." Mrs. Allison was nothing loath to impart the tale. "She'd been going about an awful lot with a young man here, one of the dilettante, modern-poet kind. I don't know that he had any of his poetry published, but writing was his excuse for not doing any real work. They had had quite a violent affair for three or four years. People had gotten rather down upon poor, dear Margaret. Every one in Roseville knows her—her father was the leading physician here in his day. But not even his memory could induce them to overlook Margaret's goings on. Of course, the Greenbaums didn't mind. They're not very much in the Roseville swim, themselves, yet. They're still regarded as newcomers. They built that gingerbread palace of theirs only about six years ago. They took Margaret on, partly to help them into Roseville society, such as it is. They kept her even when they found she wasn't likely to be particularly useful in that respect because they knew they had a good thing in her. Trust their race to realize a bargain!"

"She's wonderful in the languages and music. Her mother was a singer—a French or Italian woman, I forget which. Doctor Shreve met her when he was studying abroad. I suppose that accounts for the—the—what do we call it?—the unconventionality in Margaret. Well, maybe Reggie Vanderpoel will marry her when he comes home! He enlisted the very day we declared war. Funny thing for a modern poet

to do, wasn't it? And have I bored you to death with our petty little suburban tale?" She rolled up the sock, thrust the needles briskly into it, and stood up, glancing at her wrist watch with a gasp of dismay at the lateness of the hour. "Will you come to dinner soon again? There is so little I can do for you dear boys! But I *have* got a fair cook. And I can share her with you, can't I?"

She hovered above the chair upon which he was stretched out. She glanced rapidly about her and then laid her smooth fingers for a second on his forehead. J. J. winced and almost jerked away from the contact. But he said politely that, of course, he would love to come to dinner again, and that Mrs. Allison, by way of her cook, was doing a wonderfully patriotic service for her country.

Had J. J. been an older man or a better man he would not have suffered so keenly from the stabbing which the visitor had administered to him. The experience of age would have enabled him to reflect philosophically that, even if all she said were true, it did not mean that the girl who had moved him so profoundly was altogether evil. Years would have bestowed upon him the invaluable knowledge that men and women are not cut entirely of a single piece of cloth. He would have known that there may be badness in good people, weakness in strong people, and sometimes quite redeeming virtues in bad people. But J. J. was young and the wise charity of middle life was quite beyond him. And furthermore, J. J. had gleaned his experience of sinners in circles which gave a good deal of plausibility to the doctrine that black is really quite black, and that, conversely, white must be really quite white. There had to be entirely good women in the world, for J. J., in order to make up to him for the entirely bad ones he had known.

When, later, at the concert, Miss Shreve sang the Scotch songs he had begged her for, he rather ostentatiously kept out of the big hall in which the performance was given. He didn't want to hear any light-o'-love singing the songs he had heard his mother crooning! But he declined Mrs. Allison's next invitation to dinner. If only he could make a quick recovery and get back to France and to advancement, and away from women!

While he was glooming around the place in this state of mind he was summoned one day into the office of Colonel Mead, the officer in charge. The colonel talked a little about his rib, asked him if he felt equal to doing a bit of Red Cross campaigning, and then, when the interview seemed about ended, began again somewhat abruptly.

"By the way, lieutenant," he said, "what was your experience with this attractive and hospitable Mrs. Allison the night you dined there?"

"My experience, sir?" repeated J. J., bewildered.

"Yes. Was her husband at home? Did he try to win money from you? Was he away, and did she try to make a fool of you? And what did she give you to drink? You see, some of our men have come back from entertainment at that house rather the worse for wear, and we're trying to see if there is anything more in it than appears upon the surface."

"Her husband was not at home at first, but he came in before I left. About half past nine, I should say. He didn't try to win any money from me and—and"—Lieutenant Robinson colored a little, and wished that he could believe himself possessed of an impenetrable countenance—"and I don't think I played the fool to any great extent. I don't think I did."

"Take anything to drink?" asked the colonel gruffly.

"No, sir. I'm not drinking at all."

"Anything offered to you?"

"Yes, sir. Everything." J. J. grinned reminiscently over the sparkling temptation which he had withstood.

There was a responsive gleam in Colonel Mead's eyes, promptly suppressed. He spoke rather weightily as though to undo the effect of that grin.

"Do you think, lieutenant, that you could accept another invitation from the lady and seem to play her game—if she has one? Of course, we're by no means sure that she has. But they are newcomers here, though they've edged their way into the charmed circle with war work, war contributions, and all that. They've come since the club was taken over as a hospital—and—well, will you help us to try her out?"

J. J. turned a little pale. "I'm afraid to trust myself, sir, when it comes to drinking a little and then stopping," he said honestly. "I haven't had anything at all since I came into the service, but before that, one drink used to be only the signal for a great many. I'm still afraid of myself. If you think I could"—he hesitated—"seem to play her game without drinking anything, of course I'd be glad to take it on."

"There'll be no harm done by your trying it, anyway. Now, this is what we've doped out."

He pulled his chair up closer to J. J.'s, and for fifteen minutes there was no other sound in the room but the low, steady hum of his voice and an occasional "Yes, sir," from J. J.

CHAPTER IV.

In spite of the smirching of Margaret Shreve's reputation by Mrs. Allison, Lieutenant Robinson did not make a swift recovery from his attack of the strange malady known as love at first sight. He could not help seeking her society whenever it was possible; he could not help torturing himself with the constant interrogation as to whether

that austere and noble look of hers could be a cloak for wantonness, or, at any rate, for a pathetic folly. And then he could not help forgetting his questions in the sheer joy of her presence. He could not help making love to her in a hesitant sort of way, partly bold with the recollection of what Mrs. Allison had said, partly shy with an inner conviction, deeper than mere knowledge, of his own unworthiness, partly panic-stricken with sudden recollections of Sadie, whom, for the most part, he forgot, and wholly winning with a boyish charm that J. J. had never lost, even in his worst times.

Did she respond to his love-making? With beating heart he used to ask himself the question as he lay awake in the long ward at night. Had she blushed, or had he only imagined a blush, when he had brushed the rose he gave her with his lips before he handed it to her? And even if she had blushed, did that denote anything more than a startled rebuke, perhaps? When the "Yours very sincerely, Margaret Shreve" of her notes—always in answer to urgent communications from him—became: "In haste, M. S.," did she mean anything by it? Of course not! See how Mrs. Allison's billets-doux were signed—"Yours, Nell A.," with a long curlicue doing duty for the remainder of the name of Allison!

And, anyway, what did it matter to him, the husband of Sadie Mears?

Remembering Sadie, he would avoid Margaret, or would torment himself by seeing her only on her stated visits to the hospital, watching her from a distance. He used sometimes to ask himself if he had gone quite mad, if he contemplated a sort of rottenness of which not even the old J. J. would have been guilty. And then he took a bitter solace in the recollection of Mrs. Allison's gossip. The girl was no saint, herself, for all her saintly aspect! She did not deserve the consideration which



His arms were outstretched for her, his eyes summoned her, his whole being yearned unutterably toward her. But she moved away from him.

even men of the sort he had been, sometimes had it in their code to give to inexperience.

One afternoon she drove one of the Greenbaums' cars around to the hospital. Mrs. Greenbaum, whose patriotic activities were generally confined to the larger theater of New York, had invited four officers to drive with her that afternoon and had then been the victim of an emergency call from her motor corps in the city. At first she called up the hospital and canceled her engagement. Afterward she had the inspiration of sending Margaret as her substitute. But by that time most of the convalescents who were able to drive about the country had gone out. J. J. happened to be lounging on the

piazza, rather morose in spirit. It was decided that a ride would do him good, and he and Margaret started off alone together.

Somewhere in the country beyond Roseville, there was a blow-out. Margaret was cheerfully efficient about it. Indeed, so peculiar had J. J.'s mood seemed, that she might have been excused for welcoming the trifling disaster as a diversion. J. J. insisted upon trying to help her. Their hands met over an extra tire, and the fever in J. J.'s veins mounted dangerously. He forgot Sadie, he remembered the Reggie Vanderpoel of Mrs. Allison's story

only to inflame himself the more by the remembrance, and to silence the final warnings of his diffidence. He caught Margaret roughly to him and kissed her. When he had done it, he was endlessly miserable and ashamed. He stood aside, waiting for the lightnings to blast him.

Margaret retreated a step, looked at him with eyes more reproachful than astonished.

"Why do you do a thing like that?" she asked him in the deep voice that never failed to find the chord in his heart that quivered responsive to its note.

"Oh," said J. J., striving to be easy, "you know that I'm crazy about you, don't you? Of course, you know it!"

"And does your being crazy about me," asked Margaret, "give you the right to be impertinent to me?"

"No," said J. J. contritely. Then his face, with its funny mixture of boyish shame and grown-up ardor, broke into a smile that was altogether youthful and disarming. "Only your being crazy about me could give me that right," he said, coming closer to her again. "You do like me, don't you? Don't you, a little, Margaret?"

He was close beside her again and his hands trembled toward her. Then he saw that her white face was broken by emotion he could not comprehend. There were tears in her dark eyes and tears in her lovely voice as she answered.

"Of course, I like you. I like you very much! I've liked you because you seemed to me such a decent sort of boy." J. J. gulped, remembering his career. Women were innocent creatures! Or could it be that he really was a decent sort of boy and that all the follies which had established his position in the world as something quite different had been of a piece with the silly high spirits that had made him smash windows when he was ten? Then he remembered Sadie and that ineffable back room of the Entente Café where he had sealed his doom. He hung his head. He listened to Margaret ending her analysis of his character. "And I like you because you are doing what I would have given anything to be able to do."

Her eyes glowed, her figure seemed to take on majesty as she spoke. She forgot herself and her habitual reticences, and her words were fervent, fluent. For the first time J. J. had the large conception of the war, saw himself and all his fellows as crusaders in a great cause. She meant it, too; by Jove, she meant it! Whatever the truth about her and that poet person, she was a girl of lofty ideals, of selfless

possibilities! J. J. reestablished her upon her pedestal, and rejoiced in his heart.

But when it was all over, when he had had his lecture and had groveled before her, he came back, with his whimsical, impudent grin, to his original statement.

"But, you know, just the same, I am crazy about you!"

She looked more like a human girl, less like a young prophetess, when she blushed at that restatement of his case.

"Well, you're not to act crazy about me," she said briskly. Then her eyes darkened with a look he could not understand until he explained it by the Vanderpoel story.

"I mean it," she added seriously. "I like you, as I told you, very, very much—both because you are Lieutenant Robinson, wounded at Château-Thierry, with all that that means, and because you are you. But there are reasons—there is a reason why you must get over being crazy about me, as you call it. I mean it!"

J. J. knew of at least one reason, and he suspected the other. He found himself feeling very bitter toward the certainty of Sadie Mears and the possibility of Reggie Vanderpoel and the fate that had delayed his meeting with Margaret.

"I only wish I might have known a woman like you earlier," he told her, as, the tire finally adjusted, they climbed back into the car. "Only there aren't any more like you."

He quite believed both statements at the moment; that is, that he had never met any women as noble as Margaret, and that, on the whole, he couldn't have met them because they didn't exist.

And then they entered upon the state of love which is, perhaps, not the least blissful of all its blissful gradations. They saw each other with the fearless frequency of people who are sure that they "can never be anything more to

each other," that they understand each other, that they expect nothing from each other, want nothing from each other. They called their feeling friendship, and J. J. sometimes was moved to descant to Margaret upon its superiority to love. It was safe and sane; it was unselfish and spiritual. Margaret was of the opinion that love, at its best, might partake of the higher qualities of friendship.

One day as she uttered this profundity, she looked so entirely lovely that J. J.'s hand could not resist the temptation to close over hers. Hers were efficient hands, brown and firm and a little calloused across the busy palms; but they thrilled him as Mrs. Allison's satin fingers could no longer thrill him.

"Oh, Margaret!" he cried brokenly.

She pulled her hand away and she faced him, pale and frightened. Something in her veins had responded to the great wave of urgency that had beat in his at the touch, and she was indignant, startled with herself, with life, as well as with him.

"I have told you," she began with a catch in her breath, but he interrupted her.

"I know. I know. I—oh, I am so miserable! Margaret, no matter how much you may not love me, no matter how much you may think you love some one else——"

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. Except that, even if you don't feel yet toward me as I feel toward you, even if I could make you let me love you, make you love me, nothing could stop me—I would wait for you, I would teach you—except that—except that—Margaret, I am married."

They were on the terra-cotta-tiled terrace of the Greenbaums'. In the garden below them, Margaret's charges, the two children, were playing. Behind them was a tea wagon, loaded with wheatless, sweetless afternoon refresh-

ments. It seemed to him that after he had spoken the whole world stood still for a second; that the bright, glancing figures of the children were fixed like statues in the greenery; that the crystalline air, palpitant above the flowers, was solidified; that Margaret's beautiful, living eyes, her mobile lips, were transfixed into some dead presentiment of a woman. And then—miracle! The whole world came to life again after its instant of cessation. Margaret spoke, her face lovely, tender, uplifted. She said:

"Ah, I am glad that you told me. I am glad that it is so! Now, now we can be friends, true friends! You will never again—insult me with love-making. Why did you not tell me before?"

"I—I have never told any one. I am ashamed. I—but I had to tell you. I love you so! I had to tell you the truth. The only reason I have made love to you in ways you couldn't like, as though I were trying a game, a flirtation, was, you see, that I hadn't the right to make true love, to kneel, to beg you to marry me. I am not fit to tie your little white shoe laces, Margaret." He looked down at her rubber-soled sneakers as he made the time-honored statement of abjectness. "But I love you so, I worship you so, that if it weren't for that thing, I know I could make you love me in time, no matter—no matter how much you don't love me now." He was conscious that he was far from a fluent lover, with his confused sense of inherent unworthiness, with his bondage to Sadie, and with the dimly defined menace of the unknown Vanderpoel in his thoughts. But the girl found his misery convincing and she looked at him tenderly.

"Why has she never come to see you? Or has she? At any rate, you have never gone to see her. Why haven't you?"

J. J. told her the story. Of course.

he expurgated it. Of course, with all his determination to tell the truth, to paint himself as blackly as the facts demanded, he laid a little rose upon the edges of the picture. For, when he was through, Margaret touched his hand of her own accord, touched it soothingly, unafraidly.

"Poor boy!" she said. "My poor boy!" He heard the possessive pronoun, softly as she murmured it, and somehow a wonderful happiness irradiated his misery.

Margaret saw his duty very clearly. She seemed almost to rejoice in it. It was, of course, to do the hard thing. It was to be faithful to the high resolve he had had when he married Sadie. He must be the girl's salvation as he had meant to be, her salvation in a far finer way than his intention had embraced! He must live with her, when the war was over; he must redeem and uplift her through and through, not merely superficially, crudely, and formally, by the bestowal of his name and pay allotment.

J. J., who had seen Sadie and who, despite the cloudy circumstances of their days together, had a tolerably clear recollection of her in the back of a mind that had astonished him during the past sixteen months by its powers of retention and assimilation, had his doubts about the possibility. But he loved to hear Margaret talk. He loved to watch the lighting of her grave face as she uttered noble words. She almost hypnotized him into forgetting the actual Sadie Mears, and into foreseeing a future in which a regenerate girl, the pure gold of whose nature shone, free from dross, thanks to his sacrifice of his own happiness, looked adoringly into his eyes, and into those of a friend, Margaret. For Margaret was to be the friend of both. She was to be the mentor of the wife whom existence had so cruelly handicapped.

It was a lovely picture, though a lit-

tle sad. It made the divorce court look unspeakably sordid and squalid. A lifelong friendship with Margaret, her appreciation, her respect, her reverence, even—were not these, unstained by any selfish clutching at personal happiness, better than mere marriage with her over the wreckage of another woman's soul, better than wading toward bliss through the ugly mire of legal separations?

It spoke volumes for Margaret's gifts of eloquence that J. J. dreamily, sadly, and yet a little exaltedly, too, accepted her doctrine of self-renunciation.

Though, of course, it was difficult for him, with Sadie in the background, to do anything else!

CHAPTER V.

He never entered upon any duty of his military career with the distaste he felt for the assignment Colonel Mead had given him in regard to Mrs. Allison. He deferred its execution on one pretext or another until his chief demanded bluntly whether or not he intended to carry it through. J. J. was able truthfully to allege a coldness on the part of the lady, and her failure to make definite her indefinite invitation to dinner. The colonel suggested that probably his own attitude had not been eager, and J. J. said, resignedly, that he would try to bring the thing to pass.

He succeeded. The next time she drifted, flower-laden, smiling, into the hospital, with an orderly trailing her with a basket of illustrated weeklies and boxes of monogrammed cigarettes, he recalled from his past experience the words, flattering, bold, to use, the exact blend of impertinence and deference to exhibit. The result was that Mrs. Allison named the next night as one on which she would be delighted to see him at dinner. Her husband, she said, was sure to be at home, and

that would be so pleasant for both of them. Phil simply adored to talk with men who had been across. Poor dear! Forty-eight years would never have kept him on this side if their exemption had not been reinforced to absolute prohibition by flat feet and a stigmatism!

But the next evening, when Lieutenant Robinson entered the pretty house, his hostess met him with expressions of dismay and petulance. Phil had just telephoned that he wouldn't be home to dinner. Wasn't it too annoying? He couldn't get out before the ten-eighteen, and by that time Lieutenant Robinson, thanks to the stupid hospital regulations, would be gone. Wasn't it simply maddening?

"Shall I be polite about Mr. Allison or tell you the truth?" said J. J., looking with flattering and unmistakable meaning at her.

"You bad boy!" she said.

"I haven't a doubt in the world that your husband is a delightful man," lied J. J., who had pronounced convictions to the contrary, "but you see, we fellows get sort of fed up on men, delightful and otherwise. So you don't mind my saying that I am awfully contented to be here alone with you?"

"I ought, at least, to have a girl to keep you happy," she murmured. "Perhaps if I telephoned——"

"I don't need any other girl to keep me happy," said J. J.

"What shall I do with you?" cried Mrs. Allison in mock despair. "You're bold, you're dreadfully bold, and, you know, we had already decided that I was old enough to be your mother!"

"Oh, no! That wasn't the conclusion we had come to, at all!"

J. J. wondered that she could be so dull as not to see what a labored effort it all was with him, what a purely perfunctory response she got to all her leads. But she seemed to think that she and he were well launched on the road

of flirtation. He supposed it was not for him to find fault with her acceptance of him as a player, but rather to be thankful for it.

The dinner was excellent, delicious. His abstemiousness in the matter of drinks again disappointed her, and she rallied him upon it. But J. J. managed to intimate that he required no alcohol incitements to emotion when he was with her, and she gave him a long, slow, provocative glance from out the thicket of curling lashes.

The game proceeded. J. J. acted the part of a precocious youth badly smitten by the mature charms of a fascinating woman of the world, but a little shy about believing in the possibility that she might have a return of the sentiment. Mrs. Allison did her best to dispel his modest doubts. She hovered near him. She touched him on the arm, on the hands, on the cheek. And still he refrained, like St. Simon of Stylites, as he told himself, from responding in kind. She ran her hand through his thick auburn hair, and he only said:

"You know, you take a risk when you do things like that."

"What risk?" Her voice was low and sweet, languorous with invitation.

"The risk that I'll turn into a big bear and eat you up."

"Perhaps I'd like to be eaten up." Her words were soft as dripping honey, and she came and sat close beside him upon the davenport where she had again established him. J. J. rose and put his hands, contrary to regulations, in his pockets. The game was difficult. She was pretty and confoundedly alluring! He wanted to do what the colonel had assigned him to do, but he was hanged if he wanted to let the vagrant impulses of his blood make him unfaithful, even in desire, to Margaret!

"You are an anchorite!" she taunted him.

"You mustn't be too sure of that.

You mustn't bank on it. You mustn't tempt even an anchorite beyond his strength."

He kept walking up and down. Sometimes he glanced out through the long French windows toward the bloom-embowered balcony. She had suggested their sitting there, but he had pleaded his invalid's need of the davenport.

It was drawing near to the hour of his return to the hospital, and his indiscretions had been confined to verbal ones and an occasional touch of her hand. She made an excuse for leaving him alone for a while. When she came back, she switched off the lights as she came into the room.

"Why did you do that?" he asked her, a little startled.

"I've changed into something more comfortable than that harness of a dinner frock," she said, "and I was afraid that you might think me too negligee. I am not sure I want you to see me."

"I think I should like to."

She turned on a single light, the one in the lamp near the davenport. Its rose and gold fell upon a figure very graceful, very seductive, and most generously revealed through floating clouds of chiffon, pink and blue.

"Do you like it?" she asked, revolving slowly before him, her arms outspread so that the covering fell away from them, and they shone, rounded, soft, pinkily white, from wrist to breast, to shoulder.

J. J. called upon the recollection of Margaret to keep him from making the fool of himself that the woman was determined he should make.

"Very pretty," he said gruffly. "But won't you catch cold?"

She sat down beside him, very close to him. Her hand wandered back of his neck, touched him, found the fixture which she sought, snapped it off.

"No," said her voice out of the dark-

ness. "I shan't take cold. I—I—oh, boy! Don't you care at all?"

J. J. had eluded the caressing hand that sought to clasp him on its way from the lamp. The shoulder she sought to rest her head upon was not there. He was standing, walking across the room, looking for the switch that would set the side lights all ablaze. Another hand found it first. The irreful Mr. Allison flooded the room with light and with profanity at the same second. But the profanity died a swift death. On the other side of the room, in the long French window opening from the side piazza, stood Colonel Mead and another officer.

"Very well done, Lieutenant Robinson," said the colonel. "And that will do for to-night. I will take charge here, and deal with these people." He looked sternly at the pair. "You will be interested to learn," he told them, "that I have had witnesses here since Lieutenant Robinson arrived for dinner."

"Good night, sir," said J. J., saluting.

He went out of the house. He breathed great breaths of sweet, clean air. He had no compunctions any longer about the part he had played. A pair of knaves, working upon the passions of young men, working upon the weaknesses of boys—he was glad that he had kept his head that first night; he was glad that he had held out against the brazen charms of the woman, and that, by so doing, he had become the means of saving others from enmeshment in her wiles.

He saluted Margaret's windows as he went by the Greenbaums'. He so-laced himself with the thought that perhaps that harpy back there had lied when she had accused Margaret, his pure, noble darling, of a light love affair. A woman like that, incapable of understanding high relationships, defiled all that she touched!

CHAPTER VI.

"You can't imagine what it is to me to have to tell you this, Miss Shreve." Mrs. Allison's voice was broken with pain. Her face was white. There were dark circles beneath her eyes. Her costume, a tailored affair of gray cloth, accentuated the absence of her usual vivid color. "But I felt that I owed it to you. As an older woman, I owed it to you. Short a time as I have lived here, I felt I owed it to you. Of course, I had seen—we had all seen—that he seemed interested in you, and we all saw that you were awfully good to him. Perhaps a little better to him than to some of the others. Well, that was no harm, no harm at all. If a little romance had developed out of it, I am sure that all Roseville would have smiled and said, 'Bless you, my children,' to the tune of pages and pages in the *Gazette*."

"There was never any possibility of what you suggest. There was never any possibility of romance. None whatever." Margaret spoke leadenly.

"Well, I am heartily glad of it, my dear. I suspected him from the first time he came to our house. A little too free in his manner, a little too bold and careless! Hands, eyes, words—all a bit given to misbehavior of the kind that you couldn't quite call misbehavior! Of course, I merely put it down to a lack of—er—breeding. And goodness knows we can't refuse to be kind to the poor lads just because they have not had early advantages, and so haven't the same code of manners as ourselves! We had a sailor for dinner Christmas who shoveled turkey down his throat with a knife, and, for all that, he was a thoroughly nice youngster. But—well, I've told you. I've told you under the strictest seal of confidence. No matter what you hear, you mustn't betray that I have told you the truth. You promised me, didn't you?"

"Oh, I shan't say anything about it." Margaret was abrupt. She did not look at the older woman.

"It was only to warn you."

"I understand. I—I am much obliged." Never was gratitude more briefly and churlishly expressed.

"Of course, you might never have such an experience with him. You might never even approach it. Men of that sort often think that they may be freer with a married woman than with a girl. Though you would regard a married woman old enough to be his mother as safe. I always reminded him, when he was fresh, that I was old enough to be his mother. I thought I ought to warn you. Mrs. Greenbaum is away so much, and you are so much alone here."

"I understand, indeed I understand." Margaret's impatience fairly screamed at the woman to be gone, but still she sat and talked.

"The only thing for me to do," she went on, "is to go away. I simply will not make trouble for any boy who has risked his life for the sake of the women of this country, as all our boys have. No matter what any one of them may do, no matter what, I shall stand friend to him! That is, I shall never be an enemy. It is easier for me to close the house and to go away for the rest of the season than to change my attitude toward the boys in the hospital. It will be less noticeable. Of course, Lieutenant Robinson will have gone back to France by the time I come home."

"Ah!" breathed Margaret, as though some pain not to be borne in silence had smitten her.

"And there will be no need to report the horrible affair to the hospital commandant. I understand that Colonel Mead is soon to be relieved. He's going to a hospital in Georgia, they say. Have you heard it?" She leaned forward, very eager.

"Tell me, please, is that your wife down there, looking at the fur coats—the girl in the garnet-colored cape?"

"I heard something to that effect."

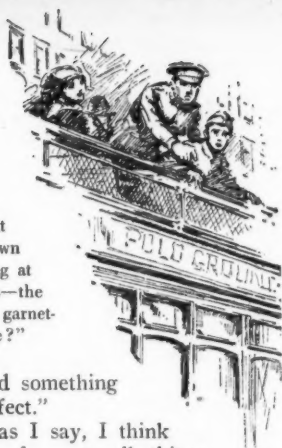
"Well, as I say, I think it is better for me, all things considered, to go away for a while and to adopt a less friendly and open-house system when I return, than to stay here and report the boy. Besides, a woman hates to admit that she has been insulted. It seems a reflection on her own dignity, doesn't it?"

"I don't know," said Margaret miserably, uninflectedly.

"I think it does," said Mrs. Allison with decision. "A reflection on her dignity! And to admit that she has been saved from actual violence only by the unexpected arrival of her husband—how would that sound? As if I had been utterly blind to what was coming all the evening. Well, I admit I was. I heard the ridiculous things he said—he was going to be a big bear and eat me up, and all that sort of stuff—without half attending to him. I was preoccupied with some affairs of my husband's, with the affair that had unexpectedly kept him in the city over dinner time. Of course, I ought to have been attending to him—to Lieutenant Robinson, I mean—but I wasn't. Not much, at any rate. And so, I suppose, I may be said to have invited the dreadful encounter." She closed her

eyes, and the shudder that shook her was a genuine one. Margaret, looking at her, felt that she had certainly undergone some devastating experience since she had seen her last. And to think that it was J. J.! Oh, horrible, horrible!

But, after all, wasn't it natural? Did not the Allison woman's story bear the earmarks of truth? Hadn't he made love to her without permission or invitation? Hadn't he married a girl of the streets in a fit of drunken amorousness? What sort of boy, of man, was he? And what had happened to her, Margaret Shreve, of the serious mind, of the educated tastes, that her fancy should waver to such a one? Had the war quite



turned her brain? Had she lost all standard except those of a heady patriotism?

"Well, my dear"—her visitor rose reluctantly, lingeringly—"I must go. We decided on the trip to the Yellowstone late last night, and we're starting to-night. There's expedition for you, isn't there? Phil is a great hustler. Don't be unhappy over what I've told you—not too unhappy. I only told you to put you on your guard."

"Good-by," said Margaret, rising and holding out her hand. "I know you meant to be kind. You *have* been kind." She corrected herself. "Only, of course, it was a shock. But I am glad you told me. I hope you and Mr. Allison will have a wonderful holiday."

He hadn't even had the excuse of drunkenness this time for his worse-than-folly! The woman said that he had not been drinking at all! Oh, the ugliness, the bestiality!

Mrs. Allison walked briskly out to her little runabout. Her face was pinched and ugly in the bright sunlight, thin-lipped, mean, vindictive, all its youth gone. The smile with which she climbed into her car did not add to its attractiveness.

It was not much that she had been able to do, of course, between ten o'clock of the night before and the eleven o'clock train to town this morning, which that stiff of a Colonel Mead had suggested, as the latest hour for her departure from Roseville, unless she wished him publicly to oversee her arrangements! But, brief as the time had been, she had used it, she hoped and believed, to the best advantage. She had blackened J. J.'s reputation in the quarter where her jealous instinct told her it would most cruelly hurt him to have it blackened.

She had also managed to spread among some other of her acquaintances the same story of her experience with which she had regaled Margaret. She

had spared them part of the detail, to be sure, but she had left them with the horrified belief that one of the officers at the hospital would have been more at home in an invading Hun army than among a group of nice American boys, recovering from wounds gained in reducing that dreadful horde to innocuousness! Only her husband's opportune arrival had saved her from actual harm at the lust-maddened creature's hands!

She had "covered her get-away." It was thus that she expressed it to herself. She had dealt a blow at the boy which might or might not prove lastingly deft. Of course, things always leaked out, and despite the reticence of the army authorities, perhaps the truth would some day percolate through the suburb. She would never return there to live! Though even that might be safe! She realized that the earliest version of a story out always wins and keeps many adherents! Some people in Roseville would always believe that her hospitality had been repaid with shameless ingratitude, with threatened outrage. To some people she would always be a martyr!

So she walked out of Roseville and out of the life story of J. J., the woman whose patient lures he had first resisted, and thus taught himself that resistance was possible to him. She was trying now to do him a serious hurt, but, if she had but known it, no hurt in her power to bestow could balance the benefit she had conferred when she had first taught him that the war had made him a disciplined man, who did not have to yield to any desire, however easily gratified, however pleasant. She had taught him that, for the future, the cheap delights her kind afforded were no more to him than the striped candies in the confectioners' jars were to him. And against that proving of himself the injury that she inflicted, however great it might have been, was petty.

J. J., unaware of it, felt its results and he did not regard them as petty that day. He did not know what had happened, but he was soon made aware that something had. He called Margaret on the telephone, and the maid at the Greenbaum house reported that Miss Shreve was lying down and asked to be excused. As soon as he could, he walked up to the big palace, and was met at the door by the information that Miss Shreve had taken the children off for a picnic supper, and that she would not be at home until after seven. Did the maid know where the picnic was to be held? She did not; decisively and aggressively she did not!

A note which he wrote Margaret that evening went unanswered. The next day lagged and dragged. The telephone into the Greenbaum house was once more rude. He could not understand it. The vision, pale and pure and romantically satisfying, of Margaret playing guardian angel to a recreated Sadie, of Margaret being a saintly visitor upon his self-sacrificing hearth, began to grow dim. What was the matter with her? He asked himself the question quite crossly, and it sounded more natural than the loftier sentiments which he had formed the habit of reciting to himself.

Before he had formulated a reply or had induced her to do so, he received the gratifying intelligence that he was now recovered from his fracture, and that he was to report at once to Camp Upton for further duty. Upon that information he called up the Greenbaum house with the determination to stay upon the wire until he heard Margaret's voice at the other end even if he were court-martialed for failure to obey instructions; even if he were shot as a deserter, by Jove! Something of the determination of this resolve must have sounded in his voice, for Margaret was finally induced to come to the telephone. He told her of his im-

pending departure. When could he see her between that moment and the next morning at seven-thirty?

He couldn't see her at all.

But he *must* see her! Did she realize that this might be his last chance of seeing her for weeks, months—perhaps forever! He would undoubtedly be sent back to France in a week or two.

She thought, she said coldly, that was what he wanted. At any rate, it must be what he expected—soldiers had to expect to be where the fighting was!

"Margaret!" He was cut, bewildered, undone, by her attempted satire. If Jessie, his mother, had ever derided him, it could not have astonished him more.

"Of course, I wish you all sorts of luck," said Margaret formally.

"Margaret!" he cried again, more wildly this time.

There was silence after his call, but he knew that she had not hung up the receiver. He knew that she waited there, that she waited, quivering with emotion as he was quivering at the other end. He did not know what the emotion was that she felt or that he felt—only there was something intangible, resistless, holding them together. By and by, he spoke again, softly, fearful of destroying the bond.

"Margaret, something is the matter. Something has come between us. You must let me see you. I cannot go away, to Upton or to France or—to Heaven, until I know what is the matter, until I know that nothing is the matter, and that I have my friend again."

He waited tensely. He had spoken the best that he knew.

"Very well." The voice was cavalier. "You may come at eight for half an hour."

At eight she was quite unlike herself. She was more elaborately dressed than she had ever been before. It made her more unapproachable and more desirable, more a distant queen and more

a woman who used a woman's weapons. She puzzled him completely, bewildered him. She refused to acknowledge that there was anything the matter. Was she not allowed to have moods, she wanted to know.

And then, when he was finally going away, defeated, wretched, she suddenly melted. She broke into tears. She had been unstrung by the strain of her emotions since the morning when Mrs. Allison had left town, and by the strain of emotions undergone still longer.

"Why do you cry?" he asked her. He ached to take her in his arms, but he had learned to put down desire!

"I—oh, because. I don't know. Yes I do, too!" Margaret was demonstrating that when a self-contained and serious-minded young woman undertakes to act hysterically, she can make a thorough job of it. "I cry because I'm so—so sorry I've been horrid these last days we might have had together, the last days we ever can have together in all the world! And because I don't believe a thing—she—she—she said!"

Her confession of faith was a wail.

"Who said?" he demanded, crossing the room and standing beside her, but keeping his hands away from her.

"It doesn't matter who. I don't believe it. Oh, I don't believe anything against you, Jock—not even the things you've told me yourself!"

"You darling! My darling!" cried J. J. incoherently.

"I'm not that, Jock, and I can't ever be. But I believe in you to the end of time. So—you'll always be—proving my belief in you right, won't you?"

"See here, Margaret! We're a precious pair of sillies. You do care for me—you do, you do! You can't make me believe that you don't."

"I don't want to make you believe that I don't," said Margaret.

"And I—I worship you, my dear, my dearest! And nothing else matters.

We've talked a deal of highfalutin nonsense, we two. Oh, noble nonsense, I grant you, but nonsense, Margaret, nonsense! Now if you believe in me enough to know that any slander you have heard against me is false—and it is! I've told you all the worst of me myself!—if you believe in me like that, I'm going to undo that asinine thing I did—I mean marrying that girl. And you are going to be my wife! Don't look like that. Can't you see it's the only right thing to do? You love me!" He was growing more assured, more glowing. "I love you from the topmost hair on your dear, shining head to the ridiculous heels of your slippers. I never saw you in high heels before, Margaret! It would be a crime for us not to marry. Oh, I'll do all I ever undertook to do for Sadie! I'll support her, I'll see to it that she doesn't have to live—that way any more. I never undertook to live with her, you know—only to die and leave my insurance to her! I'll do all that she has the faintest shadow of a right to expect, and more, and more! And you and I, you and I, when I come back, Margaret—"

His arms were outstretched for her, his eyes summoned her, his whole being yearned unutterably toward her. But she moved away from him, a fascinated gaze upon him the while.

"We can't, Jock—we can't!" The whisper stayed him. "We can't—not ever. You see—you see I'm married, too."

CHAPTER VII.

Lieutenant Robinson, very straight, very thin, with two lines of grim endurance graved about the mouth that used to be all youthful laughter, climbed the stairs of a Fifth Avenue bus one mild December day. The armistice, the asking for which was the one crime he would never forgive Germany, had cut in upon the only opportunity he

asked of existence, the opportunity to return to France, to kill and be killed!

He had lived for three months after that evening with Margaret, possessed and sustained only by that prospect. When the cessation of hostilities destroyed his last hope of being allowed to die the death he chose, since there was no hope of his living the life he would choose, he decided that human nature was even blacker than he had imagined. Why couldn't the Hun stand up and take annihilation gladly and like a man? What did life amount to, anyway, that he should seek, by capitulation, to preserve it?

Such reflections as these, considerable activity in traveling from cantonment to cantonment on errands for which his blind country seemed to think him well adapted, and an attack of influenza had made him years older than when Mrs. Allison had called herself old enough to be his mother. Unless time had been dealing harshly with her in the interim since her departure from Roseville, she would not be of that opinion now!

Margaret's story, which she had told him in broken sentences that unforgettable night, had stuck, a living thorn in his heart, ever since. The fact that she could forgive him a whole sordid line of light-o'-loves, that she could forgive him a marriage with a girl from the dregs—a marriage consummated before it was solemnized!—could induce no corresponding generosity on his part. And yet he had believed every word of the tale she had told him—of romanticism, of Utopian intention, of perfect inexperience. For Reggie Vanderpoel had gone away from the Little Church Around the Corner straight to the armory, whence he traveled to his cantonment. He had never held Margaret in his arms.

"Damn him! I hope he never will!" J. J. used to cry to himself, when he remembered her face, pale and beseech-

ing, as she pleaded this extenuation for her deceit of him.

They had been friends, she and Reggie, for years, ever since the Vanderpoels had come to Roseville. He had read his rhymes, outlined his projected plays, sketched his novels to her when he had been in knickerbockers and her hair had been a rope of a braid down her back. The other youngsters had made sport of Reggie's ambitions.

They had never been in love, she told J. J. that night in Roseville. Reggie had had some sentimental yearnings toward her after he had done a tour of the continent in 1914, arriving home just before the war broke. But they were merely symptomatic of temperament, not the expression of real desire. He had been in love, poetically, with fifty girls and women. Margaret was a sort of reservoir into which he poured his sentimental confidences. Occasionally, in the intervals between two affairs, he had said that he was in love with her. She was really like a superior, non-nagging sort of sister to him, Margaret said—until the World War was well advanced. Then, when she, burning with zeal, impatient of the limitations that had kept her at home while a world lay crushed and demanding succor overseas, tried to induce him to enlist in a Canadian regiment, to go over and join the Foreign Legion, Reggie suddenly declared that she was the one true passion of his life and that he wished to marry her. To all her urgings, he opposed that one urging of his. And so it had gone on until his own country had entered the fray. And that day he had told her that he would enlist if she would marry him.

She had been utterly insane—she saw that now, she told J. J.—but there had passed before her excited vision the picture of herself inspiring this one man, the picture of herself playing a vicarious part in the great and terrible conflict. She had been romantic; so,

she supposed, had Reggie. She had said that she would marry him, but secretly, and that the marriage should not be fulfilled until he had come back from the war.

Reggie was, she admitted, slippery, and she felt that he might, in some way, elude his promise to enlist if he had her really in his keeping. He might even use her as an excuse for not going!

So they had been married on the morning of the day he had gone to Spartanburg. And he had spent the next year moving from cantonment to cantonment in the United States, chiefly employed in digging ditches and writing her the most amusingly profane letters upon the glories of a soldier's life. Then one night—it was the night when J. J. had first seen her—he had clandestinely visited Roseville. He had changed in his father's house to "cits," alleging his hatred of the uniform he had been wearing, and he had begged her to meet him. His regiment was then at Hoboken, to sail in a day. She had met him. She had appointed the meeting for out of doors because she had wanted to keep the compulsion of circumstances upon Reggie. Reggie had been drinking and was impossible. He had sailed the day after the next, and he was writing her as amusingly profane letters from France as the censorship permitted.

And, after all, he had kept his part of the bargain. She would keep hers.

On the bus, J. J. thought it over. He had thought it over every day since he had heard it. He couldn't forgive it, even if Margaret had wanted him to, which apparently she didn't. She might pretend that it was all patriotism and vicarious zeal for France and the whole medley of high emotions that so many people had not felt for years! But he felt that Reggie had some share in it all, too.

A poet! A playwright! And he,

J. J., generally misspelled three words to a page in every letter he wrote! Of course, he knew that that didn't amount to much; he understood the inability to spell was a sort of secondary degree conferred by some colleges!

He was jealous. He couldn't forgive her.

Once he was out of this uniform, he was going back home. He thought he would get a job, a small, inferior job, in one of his father's companies, and would work himself up without his father's knowledge. It could be managed, he believed. And some day they would meet again, man to man. A lump would come in J. J.'s throat at the thought of that meeting.

Of course, he would have to make a clean breast of the Sadie episode when he and his father met. Sadie would be with him, Heaven help him! He was going to see that undertaking through, although in his new state of grim disenchantment with the world, he no longer had any romantic illusions about Sadie's regeneration. But he had taken it on and he would finish it.

"Sure, we'll finish the job." It was the caption under one of the Liberty Loan posters. He found himself saying it over and over again. He never said it with any joy. Sadie was always the ball and chain of his original sober conception of her as his wife. But there she was! As soon as he was out of the uniform he did not wish to disgrace by dark associations, he would look her up, find her, and set about living the rest of his life with her!

Back of him on the bus there was the sound of a quarrel. People were turning their heads to stare at the combatants, a girl and a young soldier in the overseas cap. J. J. waked up to the contention but was not interested to turn around.

They were quarreling about money. He wouldn't give her any. He was tired, he said, of having her 'blow it

in on lounge lizards' who had been 'slacking' while he was being gassed in France! Her retort was in a lower voice. The accusations and counter-accusations continued.

"Oh, my God!" cried the overstrung boy suddenly. "If I were only going back to college instead of married to you!"

The history, the tragedy of a thousand war marriages was in the cry. J. J. clenched his hands, and in his heart he echoed the boy's call. A few minutes afterward the girl insisted upon leaving the bus. Her young husband refused to accompany her. J. J. stared over the side to watch her descent. Traffic was dense, and the vehicle was stalled for four or five minutes. He looked down upon—*Sadie*. She walked with a tilt of the body he could not forget, to the window of a big department store, and stood staring in at the furs displayed there. He knew her, unmistakably! He turned and looked at the moody young fellow with the three overseas stripes upon his sleeve. He went back and took *Sadie's* empty place—if it had been *Sadie's*!

"I beg your pardon!" he cried. "I beg your pardon! But—tell me, please, is that your wife down there, looking in at the fur coats—the girl in the garnet-colored cape?"

"Yes, she's my wife. What's that to you?"

"It's everything in the world to one of us, to you or to me," answered J. J. "That is, if you meant what you said about—wishing you were going back to college."

"What do you mean?"

"Let's get off of this and go somewhere where we can talk."

They found a restaurant and they sat over ginger ale.

"*Sadie Mears*," said J. J., "married me in June, 1917. When did she marry you?"

"Oh, Lord!" cried the boy. "I never

have any luck—never, never. She married me in May, 1917, just before I was sent to Camp Meade. But she wasn't *Sadie Mears*. She was *Sadie Maher*."

"Old man, I'm sorry for you!" said J. J. fervently, affectionately. His heart was so light that he felt he could almost become an aviator without the apparatus or training. His spirit soared. "I'm sorry for you. *Mears* or *Maher*, whatever her name, that young lady committed bigamy when she married me, and I'll be free of her!"

"The miserable harlot!" cried the other. "I'll be free of her, too!"

They sought a lawyer together, and when *Sadie* eventually came to the hotel at which she and her presumptive husband were living, she was met by documentary proof of bigamy.

She was one of the thriftiest dealers in the allotments of soldiers' pay to their wives that the war developed, and she had no less than five unions to her credit, from two of which she was drawing, not pay, but insurance.

CHAPTER VIII.

"You will regard me as an unutterable cad, Margaret, and I dare say you will be quite right. But cad or no cad, I have fallen in love at last! Do you remember the illustrations in the school editions of *Goethe* we used to study—the *Gretchens* with the blond braids, the darling dumplings in the velvet bodices? All true, Margaret, all true, and perfectly irresistible!

"*Lottchen* is altogether desirable—simple where you are endlessly complex, forgiving where you would have outraged wifely dignity, complaisant, delicious. I like her cooking and her mother's cooking, and I confess to you, bright star of my earlier years, that I should approach yours with misgiving.

"If only the blamed Peace Conference would finish its business, and get a few signatures affixed to the immortal document, so that she wouldn't be

mine enemy any longer—so that I might court her openly! Only, of course, I can do nothing of the sort until you take action. You only married me to drive me into doing what you conceived to be a man's duty in the world. You wouldn't let me touch you with a twenty-foot pole even after we had signed the register in that nice church where all the indiscreet marriages are celebrated. You have probably prayed for my death—no, no; you wouldn't have permitted yourself that sin. You've tortured yourself with the thought of my return. You've heroically resolved upon martyrdom.

"If it were otherwise, Margaret, of course, you would have had me bound to you hand and foot. If you had really had one single throb of live feeling for me in all your days, I could never have looked at another woman. But, as it is, frankly, I want to come back here and live, when these times are over-past. I like the life. I think I can do some real work here. And I should like the blond, kind Lottchen for my own.

"Will you consult the governor about the step toward an annulment?

"I'm a brute, my dear, but I'm an honest one. And that is why I shall

say, to the end of my days—in *Deutsch*, by and by—that there never was any other woman as beautiful and high and fine as the dear dream of my boyhood. So much too beautiful and high and fine for me!
R. V."

The letter had been read and reread. Margaret read it for the last time. She smiled sadly, but with a humor that had not been used to glint her eyes. Then she folded it. She thrust it into an envelope. Before she sealed it, she took up a half column from the local paper. "Suit for Marriage Annulment Brings Secret Romance to Light," the headline read. She glanced through it. "Gallant young soldier, one of the first to enlist—beautiful young woman, devoted war worker——" Her amused eyes traveled down the lines before she finally consigned the clipping to the envelope.

Then she sealed it and with a firm hand addressed it.

Lieutenant J. J. Robinson,
Care of Angus Robinson, Esq.,
Seattle, Washington.

She went out and mailed it, then went back to her room to mark off on the calendar the first of the days that must elapse before his telegram could come.

THE HUNDRED ROADS

I THOUGHT there were a hundred roads, and each led out and far;
But now I know that I have trodden all the trails there are;
All the paths the world has, crowded ones and lone.
There were never any roads except the ones I've known.

Never to have seen them all, that I could have borne;
To have felt there waited one, starry night or morn.
But to know that, fall or spring, rain or sun, for me,
There are no more roads to take, and no more lands to see!

Oh, it seemed a wide thing, the world, when I was young;
Hills to scale and trails to trudge and trees to walk among.
But the grief to know so soon, as I too surely know,
The lands are seen, the roads are done—and I still wild to go!

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.



"Vanity, Vanity, All Is Vanity"

By Virginia Middleton

Author of "Is Love Enough?" "Girls and the Race," etc.

Which is the real "vanity" against which the preacher railed? Two points of feminine view.

WHAT a comfortable room!" exclaims the average, unæsthetic woman when she first enters the living room of a Certain Lady with Pretensions to Taste. And then the average, unæsthetic woman sits down and lets the soft tones of fawn and gold, picked out here and there by a strong note of black, work their soothing, warming spell upon her. She notices a tall, slim glass of yellow daffodils with the green stems gleaming through the water. She feasts her eyes upon a garden picture, making a great, strong, lovely blotch of color against a side wall; upon a long, old mirror, reflecting, redoubling the beauty of the room; upon the fire sparkling on the hearth; and she feels that it is all good—even to the cat, slumbering before the open fire on a cushion that matches the cushions on the wide, inviting davenport.

And, if she is nine average, unæsthetic women out of ten, she doesn't realize all the thought, all the meticulous care, all the hours of searching and of testing that have gone into the making of that lovely room for a Certain Lady. If she knew—the average, unæsthetic woman—she would say with a virtuous sniff: "Oh, that's absurd! That's 'art-y', and Heaven deliver us

from an 'art-y' home! It's the least homelike place on the footstool. No. Give me plain, old-fashioned comfort. I don't want any decorator telling me what color of background I ought to have, and making me put away my grandmother's gold-banded tea set because it isn't of the same period as the dining room he has designed for me! One's habitat ought to be a growth, not a manufacture. And, as for me, nothing will induce me to give up the Landseer engraving over the mantelpiece, because I have loved it since I was a child. And all this deliberate stuff about the shades for the electric lights and the lamps, and about colored candles, is really distasteful to a plain citizen like me. It's all art-y."

Nevertheless, when she returns to her Landseer and even to her grandmother's delicate old tea set, she looks about her with a sense of incomplete satisfaction. She makes vague, half-formulated comparisons in her mind. Of course, the Certain Lady with Pretensions to Taste has a better-shaped living room than the one which the speculative apartment-house builder has bestowed upon *her*, the average, unæsthetic woman! That must be the cause of the restlessness and dissatisfaction

she feels! And that's something that can't be remedied before the termination of the present lease, if ever. She hasn't time to ransack the city for old, remodeled houses with their good proportions. Oh, well! Why bother? She has never been "art-y"; she has never been deliberate in the adornment of her home, or, for that matter, of her person. She has a good, comfortable armchair, hasn't she, and a good, strong electric light readily accessible to her reading table? Let her then find a book and forget her nebulous disgruntlement with her surroundings!

But by and by she looks up from the book. She gets up from her chair and adjusts the shades at the windows—they aren't quite even. She frowns at the window curtains of starchy white stuff, very glistening, a little harsh; she remembers the soft, faintly primrose-colored mull of the Certain Lady's curtains, although she hadn't been aware of seeing them when she was there. How foolish she is! She has always liked white—a good, clean white, with no ability to camouflage dust.

Passing the mantelshelf, which is as dreadful as only the speculative apartment-house builder knows how to make mantelshelves, but which she has never thought of covering with a plain dark lambrequin, she removes the photograph of her cousin Marie's three children, a pleasing token of family feeling, but—as some new power within her recognizes—no adornment. She even looks questioningly at the Landseer. It is a blow between the eyes—or is it the wall paper which achieves that effect?

She goes back to her book, and when next she looks up, she is restored to her usual state of satisfaction. She thanks her own particular Providence that she isn't "art-y." She recalls the gibes of Gilbert and Sullivan at the "greenery-gallery" æstheticism of Oscar Wilde's young days; she tries to think despitely of Burne-Jones' damsels in long

slips, and of Rosetti maidens gracefully doing nothing in a busy world. And she lumps the Certain Lady's room in with all that is foreign to the straight-away thinking and living in which she herself believes. She will have none of it herself. Good, plain, substantial things! She has those and she will continue to rejoice in them. But she would like a new wall paper! She must see the agent about the possibility of acquiring it.

She goes to bed contented, which is, of course, a highly desirable thing. She has been obliged to build up her content partly upon a scorn of the Certain Lady. She has to tell herself: "She must spend an awful lot of money on her house, and it's extravagance, when there are so many good causes fairly shrieking for financial aid! And she must spend an awful amount of time on it, and that's wasteful when there is so much work to be done in the world. Wasteful and selfish! And she must spend a lot of thought on it, and thought is a valuable asset which is needed in a dozen more important places than in a Certain Lady's living room. It's nothing but vanity to maintain a place like that—I'll wager she calls it a background, and has chosen the colors with special reference to her own complexion!"

And having, in her own mind, thus convicted the Lady with Pretensions to Taste of the blackest crime in all the feminine calendar of crimes—personal vanity—she goes to sleep full of the consciousness of her own strong-minded rectitude. But if the Lady with the Pretensions to Taste could express herself freely about the average, unæsthetic woman's dwelling place, her statement would run somewhat like this:

"How does any woman dare to live in a place like that; to receive her unfortunate friends in a place like that; to try to keep her thrice-miserable hus-

band's love in a place like that? Of course, the chairs are comfortable—or they would be for a blind man. And I dare say the heating apparatus is excellent and that the sunshine comes in through the front windows, but comfort depends on a great deal more than temperature, and even than sunshine. It doesn't cost any more, except in the initial outlay of thought, to have a dwelling place which doesn't give one a headache every time one spends an hour in it. Don't talk to me about a home's being a growth, unless you mean by growth development along some single principle. You can't call it a growth when you mean just a set of unrelated accretions. I know she had the Landseer and her grandmother's fine china, and although nothing in the world would induce me to live with that engraving of the stricken deer, or whatever it is, I am perfectly willing that she should do it if she wants to, only, let her take her engraving and her grandmother's tea set as starters and *grow* from that. If she's determined never to discard them, let her use them for the keynote of her furnishings. Then she will get something which is harmonious, not only in itself, but with her. What an amazingly vain woman she must be to think that she possesses in herself enough intellectual attraction, enough personal magnetism, to offset that dreadful, strident, hodgepodge of a room of hers! And she'd probably be highly indignant if one called her conceited, but that is what she is."

And if the woman who studies her surroundings, plans them and shapes them according to some principle of beauty in her own mind, and the woman who thinks it a foolish waste of time to do more with her home than to keep it hygienically tidy, regard each other with such frank disfavor, how much greater is the mutual scorn of the woman who "leaves herself as God made her," according to her own boast,

and the woman who strains every nerve to make the most of her physical charms.

"I had the shock of my life, I assure you I had," declares the average plain citizeness," when a Certain Lady and I were domiciled together during the convention in Washington when there were more reservations for hotel rooms than there were rooms. She's a nice-enough-looking little thing, or so I always thought—pretty, soft hair, and clear, soft skin, and all that. But do you know, it took her over an hour to get ready for bed! Over an hour! And after such a wonderful evening with such wonderful speeches from women all over the world! I should think she would have been ashamed of herself. Clothes all arranged on special hangers, with little wads of orris or something tied to them; a bath with some particular sort of bath salts; one kind of grease or cream or whatever she called it to remove the dirt from her face, or the powder and the rouge—for I assure you she uses both—and another kind of cream rubbed in for fifteen minutes, when she might much better have been employed in saying her prayers! A third kind of grease for her eyebrows and a fourth for her finger nails, and warm olive oil for her elbows—it was like living in the Packers' lard factory to spend the night with her! And her hair! Two hundred strokes of a brush, some very special sort of a brush, followed by combs stuck in to make all those soft, pretty daytime waves. How she could sleep I don't see. If any legislator should decree the wearing of those combs at night as a punishment for bolshevism, he would be run out of the country as a monster of inhumanity and would be told to seek his true home with the Turks in charge of the Armenian massacres. But she did it just for looks. Did you ever hear of such supreme vanity?"

But listen to the woman who believes in making the most of herself as she comments upon the woman who thanks her Creator that she is contented with His handiwork.

"My dear, you should have seen the woman I had to bunk in with at the convention in Washington. Yes, Mrs. Average Woman. How she could confront her mirror, I don't see! Her hair is getting a little gray, and when I told her, in the friendliest possible way, about a little tint she could use, she almost bit my head off in her outraged virtue. Will some one please tell me why such women think that righteousness is to be as homely as a hedge fence? Oh, yes, she was clean, I suppose—she took a brief bath and scrubbed her face hard with a soapy

wash cloth and rinsed it off in cold water! She braided her little wisp of hair in about two seconds, and was in her bed, making an awful to-do about wanting to get to sleep, before I had got the trees in my slippers? There's only one explanation for that sort of women. What is it? Vanity, vanity, of course! She's contented with herself. She doesn't realize that she's an eyesore to the community. She's conceited, through and through. 'Here I am, I am, and you may take me or leave me,' is what she proclaims to the world every day, 'but you'll make a big mistake if you leave me! I'm so amazingly worth while that it doesn't make the least difference if I look so that any self-respecting clock would stop short on seeing me!' Vanity, vanity!"



WE WHO MAY NEVER BE

WE who may never be
Wine, fire, to each other,
Only pain,
We who must live forever waiting,
Ever fain,

Let us rejoice!
One sorrow past enduring
We need not know,
The impotent, wan agony of watching
Our glory go.

Never shall sated love,
Grim, livid with remembrance,
Like a scar
Mock the white magic of that first awakening
To high dream and star,

But like a flame
Forever glowing,
Passionate and strong,
Our love shall be a birth and a beginning,
A climbing song.

HAZEL COLLISTER HUTCHISON.

When Tildy Was Mathilde

By Frances R. Sterrett

Author of "Jimmie the Sixth," "Which?" etc.



ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

A story of clothes and character.

IT was just by chance that a traveling man told Louis Herkimer, of the Big Store, of a group of New York fashion models he had seen in Chicago.

"The niftiest little bunch! And clothes! Lord! Both men and women, y'understand. They gotta week open between Chicago and St. Paul. You oughta get 'em, Louis. They'd be a a classy ad for your Big Store."

The open week fell exactly on the date of the Women's Exposition at which everything men thought women should be interested in would be demonstrated in the armory. So Herkimer listened and nodded and telephoned to make sure that the small hall adjoining the big drill room had not been engaged by Haas Brothers. Then he sent a night letter to the living models, whose address the traveling man was so fortunate as to have. And finally he sent for his advertising man.

"It will be the biggest thing ever put over in Waloo," he said, his little black eyes sparkling. "Five living models from Noo York. Three of 'em women. An' all wearing clothes so advanced 't Fifth Av'noo hasn't got a look yet. It's a little play they put on—'The Debutanty' they call it—an' they show the clothes a girl an' her mother and sister an' father an' fella oughta wear. Play it up big, Smith, for it's goin' to cost a pile of money an' we gotta get a big share of it back."

The advertising man played it up big. The demand for tickets grew and grew until a second lot had to be printed. But when the fashion models arrived from New York, by way of Chicago, they numbered four instead of five.

"We had to leave Lil in a hospital in Chicago," explained Jake Evenson, who was to show Waloo fathers how they should dress. "Yep, appendicitis. I didn't wire for I was sure you'd have a girl in the store who could take the part. We'd coach her all right. Yep, Lil was the débutante, society's little rosebud. Sure, you got a girl! I'll run through the store and pick her out myself."

Herkimer accompanied him in his search for the rosebud, and he was surprised when Evenson stopped dramatically before the hosiery and pointed to Tildy Swenson. Herkimer did not fancy blondes so he had never seen any beauty in Tildy's hair, which was the color of molasses taffy when it is half pulled, nor in her smooth pink and white cheeks, nor in her eyes, which were as blue as the sea her parents had crossed to enable her to sell hose in the Big Store. She was slim, and she carried herself as a daughter of the vikings should.

"There's your débutante! A perfect thirty-six or I'm a goat," whispered Evenson, rubbing his fat, ringed hands. "Have her up for Miss LaSalle to



So it was Mathilde Swenson who appeared twice a day in the fashion drama in the

dress and coach. You'll be surprised at the change a few glad rags 'll make," he insisted, as Herkimer hesitated.

Young Charlie Thompson, who had sold shoes just beyond the hose before the war and who was selling shoes again now that he was back from France, was at leisure for a moment, so he was able to see that two men, the boss, and a classy stranger were showing an unusual interest in little Tildy Swenson. Charlie Thompson was interested in Tildy himself and had told her so. Tildy let him take her to dances and picnics and moving-picture shows; she had cried when he went away to fight and cried when he came home; but she

would not let him take her to the altar. She did not think that the contents of his pay envelope would support a family, and she had a living demonstration at home of what marriage meant when the contents of a pay envelope were inferior to the family expenses.

"Not any of that for mine," she would say with a toss of her taffy-colored hair. "I'm not goin' to marry any man to cook an' wash. You're all right, Chas; I like you fine, an' you can dance better'n any man I know, but marryin' ain't fox trottin', not by a long shot! An', anyway, I ain't ready to settle down. I'm only eighteen, an' I got lots of time to get married."

So, as Herkimer and Evenson looked at Tildy, Charlie Thompson looked at them, and when Herkimer walked over and spoke to Tildy, Charlie strained his ears to hear what was said. Tildy blushed pinkly and only waited to give her customer her change before she followed Herkimer and Evenson to the elevator.

When Miss LaSalle had brushed Tildy's taffy-colored hair and pulled it back from her face in a modish coiffure, Tildy scarcely recognized herself. Miss LaSalle pushed the pots of cream and rouge away.

"It's a shame the Lord don't make more skins like yours when He could as easy as not," she grumbled. "Take care of your complexion, girlie, if



hall, which was packed with women and with men, too.

you onct commence to use this stuff it won't be peaches an' cream long."

She showed Tildy how she must walk slowly forth, stop, and swing around with deliberate grace, so that people might see the backs as well as the fronts of the frocks.

"You ain't a salesgirl any more. You're a débutante now, an' you ain't got a care in the world. Jest home from finishin' school an' waitin' for life's pleasures," she murmured sentimentally, as she sent Tildy out to Herkimer, arrayed as a schoolgirl in a gay striped skirt and embroidered smock and with a tennis racket over her shoulder.

"By gracious!" muttered Herkimer, opening his eyes wider. "That couldn't be little Tildy Swenson of the hose. My gracious!"

Tildy's delight in the new clothes deepened the color in her face and made stars of her eyes. She forgot that she ever had sold hose and was more of a schoolgirl than many schoolgirls. Any mother who saw her would be sure to duplicate Tildy's skirt and smock for her flapper daughter.

"I told you," whispered Evenson. "I told you we could understudy Lil here."

Tildy Swenson will never forget that day, not if she lives to be a thousand. When it was decided that she would do, Miss LaSalle gave her a complete dress rehearsal. Tildy had the normal girl's appetite for pretty things, and until then she never had realized what beautiful clothes there were for a girl to wear. She thrilled at the touch of real silk stockings on feet which never had worn anything but cheap mercerized cotton. She had to pinch herself to make sure that she was awake when the wondering Charlie Thompson fitted her to cordovan and white oxfords, to black patent-leather pumps, to riding boots, and satin slippers. It couldn't be true that any girl would ever have one, two, three, four, *five* pairs of shoes

at once! She couldn't speak when Charlie asked in an amazed whisper what on earth she thought she was. She blushed scarlet when Miss LaSalle kicked aside her coarse underthings. It wasn't Tildy's fault that she hadn't worn flesh crêpe de Chine and satin before. She loved them the minute she saw them. And she loved the frocks, every one of them. And when she was put into the wedding gown and looked at herself in the big mirror she thought that she might as well die, for life could offer her no larger moment.

"Hello," exclaimed a pleasant masculine voice from the doorway. "Is this my bride?"

And, raising her shining eyes, Tildy saw the handsomest man she had ever seen save on a moving-picture screen. He stood in the doorway in an easy attitude, and his face was all admiration as he gazed at Tildy. Tildy was all enchanting blushes as she looked at him.

"This is your bride." Miss LaSalle put another pin in the filmy veil. "This is Mr. Joseph Brownley, Miss Swenson. Mr. Brownley is the hero of our little fashion dramma," she explained to Tildy. "There! I guess you won't miss Lil now, Joe." And she stepped back to gaze at her handiwork.

"I guess I won't!" exclaimed Joe, coming in to walk all around his bride, who trembled and kept her eyes on the huge bouquet of artificial orchids and lilies of the valley which Miss LaSalle had thrust into her arms. She couldn't have raised her eyes to save her life. "The prettiest bride I ever had," murmured Joe, when he was back at his starting point.

If Mr. Brownley admired Miss Swenson, Miss Swenson more than admired Mr. Brownley. Under his warm approval she exhibited new airs and graces which she never had known she possessed. She was no longer little Tildy Swenson of the hosiery. She was Mathilde Swenson now, for Miss

LaSalle had shrieked at her homely little name.

"It will never do for a fashion model," she insisted. "We'll call you *Mateel*. Everything French goes in this business."

So it was Mathilde Swenson who appeared twice a day in the fashion drama in the hall adjoining the drill room which was packed with women and with men, too. Not that the latter cared for what was the correct wear for them as demonstrated by Evenson for middle age and by Brownley for youth, but because the fashion drama was something new in Waloo, and because their wives and daughters asked them to go, and because they drifted in from the drill hall to see what was doing. Tildy was not the only girl who admired Mr. Brownley whether he wore flannels, riding breeches, or evening clothes. Feminine Waloo thrilled at such an Apollo in such smart and correct attire and secretly envied Tildy Swenson as she appeared with him ready for tennis, riding, swimming, golf, or dancing. And when, in her bridal finery, she moved shyly to meet Joe, most correctly garbed for matrimony, there was a universal sigh.

Tildy had her share of admiration and not all of it came from the men. She was so fresh and pretty, so unsophisticated, as a *débutante* should be, and she took such huge delight in her fine feathers that even the envious women had to smile and applaud. When she ran out in the smart bathing suit, her face glowing, her eyes brighter far than any star, every man in the hall sat up straighter and opened his eyes wider.

"Godfrey!" muttered a stout man, who had drifted in to scoff at the vanity of women, and he edged around to the stage door where in time he was able to enter into conversation with Evenson, whose duties were not so strenuous as those of Brownley. But he never took his eyes from Tildy.

Charlie Thompson saw this and was chilled. "What is that old skate of a Gryton doing around here?" he asked himself.

Charlie did not leave the hall until he had the question answered. When Miss LaSalle, who was the decorously gowned mamma, and Miss Gladys Valière, the most modish of elder daughters and young matrons, came out, they were shyly followed by Miss Mathilde Swenson. Evenson introduced them, and Gryton invited them to supper at the Waloo Hotel. Charlie Thompson gritted his teeth as Tildy swept by him to Gryton's big touring car.

"So that's what it means to be a fashion model," he muttered, and stood on the curb staring after them.

It meant everything delightful to Tildy. Rides in touring cars had never fallen to her lot. She never had been in the Waloo before, although you never would have suspected it. At a hint from Evenson, Miss LaSalle had told her to slip into the smart little blue taffeta, appropriate for the *débutante* to wear for luncheons and teas. There was a hat which suited her to perfection, and she wore *kid gloves*, which reached to her elbows. No, in spite of the evidence of Charlie Thompson's gray eyes, it was not Tildy Swenson who floated into the viking room of the Waloo. It was Miss Mathilde Swenson.

Gryton could not take his eyes from her, and she could not keep her eyes from Mr. Brownley, who was still in the correct evening wear for young gentlemen. Miss LaSalle pinched her and whispered something which made Tildy blush furiously and look nervously around the big supper room. Never, not even in her wildest dreams, had she imagined that she would ever be there and in such company! Her face was like a rose, and her fingers unconsciously marked time to the music of the orchestra.



"See here, Tildy Swenson, don't you go puttin' on airs an' cuttin' up any didos, or I'll put a stop to this modelin' business so quick you won't know where you're at!"

"I believe you'd like to dance," Gryton said indulgently. "I haven't learned these new steps myself, but perhaps Brownley here—" And he nodded to Joseph, who admitted that he had mastered the modern dance.

"Do you fox trot?" he smiled at Miss Mathilde.

"I love it!" she gasped. She was glad of the practice she had had with Charlie Thompson in the crowded dance halls as Joe swung her out into the dancing throng of the supper room.

She danced like a fairy, and Joe was as light on his feet.

Gryton watched them enviously. He wished that he wasn't a fat, bald-headed man of fifty. He neglected to answer Miss LaSalle and Miss Vallière when they politely asked him questions. They stared at him and then shrugged their shoulders and devoted themselves to their supper. They had learned that one cannot have everything at once and so, for the moment, they would take the supper. The wonderful evening came to a close all too soon for Mathilde.

"I'll take Miss Swenson home if Mr. Gryton 'll lend us the car," Miss LaSalle said suddenly, as they stood on the curb again. "You might not find the way," she told Gryton impudently. "No,

don't come with us. We don't want any man but the chauffeur." And she wouldn't take any other man.

Tildy was passionately grateful as they flew down this street and up that. She would have died if Joe Brownley had seen the shabby street and the still shabbier tenement in which she lived.

While she was to serve as a model Tildy was excused from her duties at the hosiery department of the Big Store, and she planned to sleep late the next morning, like a really, truly debu-

tante. But habit made her spring from her bed when the dollar clock on the bureau struck the usual hour. She sprang back again when she remembered that she was Mathilde, not Tildy, Swenson. Her lips curved as she recalled the wonders of the night before. The applause which had greeted her rang again in her ears. On the chair by the bed was the blue taffeta, on the bureau were the modish hat, the silken hose, and the black satin oxfords. Tildy couldn't believe that she ever had worn such beautiful things. Why—why, they were fit for a princess, and she—she was only Tildy Swenson.

She slipped out of bed and ran to feel the taffeta, to hold the shoes against her cheek, and to crush the hose in her fingers. She looked in the glass and laughed with delight. Yes, she was pretty. She was! But did Joe Brownley think she was pretty?

"You up, Tildy?" Her mother heard her moving about and called from the kitchen. "Your breakfas's ready an' you better come eat it." She opened the door and stood looking at her daughter, preening peacocklike before the mirror. Then she saw the taffeta and the modish hat. "For the love of Mike! Where'd you get 'em? Where'd you get 'em, Tildy Swenson?"

"Don't call me Tildy," grumbled her daughter. "It's so common! Over to the Exposition they call me Mateel. That's the French."

"Oh, it is, is it? Well, you ain't French. You're Swede—as Swede as a Swede father an' a Swede mother can make you. An' Tildy's a good Swede name. You ain't puttin' on them silk stockings now, be you? Here's your own."

She opened a drawer and took out a pair of the coarse mercerized hose which Tildy Swenson usually wore. Mathilde Swenson turned up her nose.

"They hurt my feet!" She threw them aside contemptuously.

"Hurt your feet, do they?" Hands on hips, her mother stood and looked at her. "See here, Tildy Swenson, don't you go puttin' on airs an' cuttin' up any didos, or I'll put a stop to this modelin' business so quick you won't know where you're at. I've mis-trusted more'n onct 'twould have been better if I'd put you in some good woman's kitchen 'stead of Herkimer's. A big store like that's jest full of tem-tation to a girl what hain't got sense enough to know they's two kinds of folks in the world—those 't have an' those 't haven't. An' you know good an' well where you b'long—t those 't haven't. Don't you ever forget it. I'd like to know what Chas Thompson has to say 'bout the way you was togged out."

"It isn't any of Chas Thompson's business!" cried the indignant Tildy.

"That's as maybe," returned her mother calmly. "Now you hustle an' eat your breakfas'. Then you can git busy an' wash up the dishes. I got a big wash on an' you might as well help a little so long as you don't have to be at the store."

Tildy swallowed a protest. She could not eat any breakfast. The food was coarse in comparison with the dainty supper of the night before, and the coffee was bitter. She hated her life. Her pretty lips drooped with discontent and she scowled fiercely. Her mother didn't understand her. She was sure that the fashion mother, Miss LaSalle, would know how she felt and be sorry for her. So would Jake Evenson, her fashion father. She seldom saw her own father except on Sunday when, shaved and in a white shirt, he sat around and found fault. No, her parents couldn't understand her. It didn't seem possible that they really could be her parents. In a kitchen! She'd like to see herself in anybody's kitchen. Huh, she was too pretty to work, anyway. Mr. Brownley had said so, and Mr. Gryton. She

giggled as she remembered Mr. Gryton. What would Anna Carlson say when she heard that Tildy—no, Mateel—had been to supper at the Waloo Hotel with Anna's boss? Tildy thrilled as she remembered that dance with Joe. And now she had to wash those dirty dishes. She threw a plate on the table and it broke. She didn't care. She would like to break all of them!

As soon as the dishes were washed, she put on the taffeta. She had to wear it, for her own cheap blue serge was at the Exposition building. She hurried to get away before her mother found any more work which would coarsen her hands. And she had to stop at the store before she went to the Exposition. How she loved the Exposition! That was where life was, the life she had read about and seen at the movies. It wasn't in her dingy home where greasy dishes abounded and the woman she called mother flopped about in a dirty wrapper, her hair in damp whips around her tired, gray face.

It was great fun to sail into the Big Store in such smart clothes. Many of the girls had been at the Exposition and envied her from the very bottoms of their hearts. They envied her now, and she knew it, as she stopped to speak with a superior manner which she had donned with the taffeta. At last she found herself near the hosiery, on the edge of the shoe department, with Charlie Thompson staring at her.

"Hello, Chas," she said airily.

"Hello." But it was Mr. Grouch, not good-natured Charlie Thompson, who spoke.

She went closer.

"Say, were you at the Exposition last night? Wasn't it a swell show the Big Store put on?" Modesty forbade her to mention her part. She expected Charlie to do that.

"Do you like that sort of thing, Tildy?" he asked instead.

"Like it!" She drew a deep breath.

She couldn't tell him how much she liked it. "Say, Chas, I wish you wouldn't call me Tildy. It's so common. The manikins, that's the right name for fashion models, you know, call me Mateel. That's the French for Tildy. Ain't it pretty?"

"Not so pretty as Tildy!"

She laughed at him.

"Piffle! You're jealous. You'd like to be Mr. Brownley an' have nothin' to do but wear fine clothes."

In a flash Charlie's face was beet-red. "Jealous!" He was so furious that he choked on his words.

"Me? Of that shrimp? I've got a man's job," he said proudly, his head in the air. "And I've done a man's work. What part did your pretty friend take in the big fight? I jest wish you'd tell me that! Jest ask him, Tildy Swenson, and you'll hear that all he did was to show folks how a uniform should be worn. I bet if he was drafted he got himself exempted because he was too weak to fight. Jealous of him? Huh, I don't have to be no tailor's dummy an' strut around to show folks clothes I couldn't pay for in a hundred years. I've got a man's job!"

"Why—why, Chas Thompson!" Tildy stared at him. Charlie Thompson was usually the mildest of young men, and this outburst was like an explosion. It annoyed Tildy, although she did not believe him, not for a moment. It wasn't possible that he would rather sell shoes than to appear in a fashion drama and demonstrate the correct dress for young gentlemen.

"Say, Tildy," Charlie stepped closer to say coaxingly, "I s'pose you gotta be up there to-night, but you get off 'bout ten, don't you? What say to goin' with me to the A. O. H. dance? They gotta swell floor in their new hall, an' I gotta a coupla tickets. I'll show you some new steps."

She twisted her gloves until she remembered they did not belong to her.

"I can't, Chas. I got—I got another date," she stammered, for she saw Mr. Joseph Brownley, leisurely making his way down the aisle and generously giving the girls an opportunity to view his charms. Charlie saw him also.

"Not with him? Nor with old Gryton, Tildy?" he gasped in anguish.

But she did not hear him. She was smiling up at Joe Brownley's smiling face.

"Damn!" muttered Charlie Thompson, as he turned to show brown oxfords to an impatient customer who was so startled and so shocked that she scarcely could tell him what she wanted.

"Well, well! Look who's here," the engaging Mr. Brownley had said. "And how is our little rosebud this morning?"

Our little rosebud managed to stammer that she was very well as she swung around and walked out of the store with him, knowing very well that every girl in the store was dying to change places with her.

"You liked it yesterday—being a manikin?" grinned Joe.

"Like it!"

"The pretty clothes and the applause? Maybe it ain't quite the highest form of dramatic art, but it's missionary work all right, all right, showing these boobbs what's being worn an' how to wear it. Say, I never saw a model get it over to the crowd any better'n you done. Honest! When I saw you as a bride—say, I felt as if I was right there at the altar!"

Tildy could not have told him how she felt. She flushed again and kept her radiant eyes demurely on the pavement.

"Had your lunch?" Joe asked suddenly. "It's too early to go over to the hall. Come on in here and nibble something, while I eat my breakfast." He stopped before a rather pretentious-looking restaurant.

Tildy followed him in joyous rapture. Wasn't life wonderful? And

beautiful? Just simply beautiful? Still, she had to admit that it held dark moments for some, as she listened to the story of Joe's life; as much of his life as would make her sympathize with him. Joe thrived on feminine sympathy and admiration. He had to have them. Tildy did not know nor care what she ate or drank. It was too thrilling just to sit there and listen to his sad, rich voice. And Chas Thompson had called him a tailor's dummy! She almost hated Chas Thompson.

She divided the days which followed into two parts, the hours she lived when she was Mathilde, and the ones when she was Tildy, and which didn't count. There was no doubt of her success as a manikin. Evenson watched her with critical eyes.

"That girl's got personality," he told Miss LaSalle. "She could put any model over. What say, Clara—Lil won't be out of the hospital for a couple weeks—what say to taking this little girl with us? We won't have to pay her anything; she'll be only too glad to go."

Clara had no objections at all. She knew the attraction that a girl as young, as fresh, and as pretty as Tildy Swenson would be, and if she insisted on a rigorous chaperonage, as, of course, she would, they could dine and sup out every night in the week. Miss LaSalle had preserved few of the illusions with which she began life, and she knew very well that she owed the many excellent meals she had had at the Waloo not to Gryton, who paid the bill, but to little Tildy Swenson.

Gryton was but a cipher to Tildy. She never noticed him except when he spoke to her directly, and then she only smiled shyly in a way which made him even more infatuated. Tildy's eyes were all for young Joseph Brownley, and she nearly died of joy twice a day when she walked up to the simulated altar to meet him, her bridegroom.



It was the fourth evening that, as they left the stage after the bridal scene, they had the corridor to themselves. In Tildy's heart was still that warm glow which came when she put her trembling hand into that of her bridegroom. Joe had seen her face, and the look of girlish worship went to his head. He put out his arm and drew her to him.

"My bride," he whispered, and kissed her.

To Tildy it was the beginning of the world. She wanted to put her arm around his neck and call him her bridegroom, but Miss LaSalle opened the door of the dressing room.

"Look out for that white satin!" she called sharply. "We can't have it cleaned every week. Mateel, if you tear that veil I'll skin you! Hurry in here. Don't you know Mr. Gryton's goin' to take us to the Rose Garden!"

Without a glance at Joe, Tildy slipped into the dressing room and began to take off her bridal dress. She had wished that it really was hers many times since she had first put it on, and now it didn't seem as if she could ever let any other girl wear it. She was very quiet as they motored to the Rose Garden, and sat sedately between Gryton and Miss LaSalle and was never conscious of Gryton's bulky figure which was so close to her, for just in front, swung around so that she could look into his laughing face, was Joe Brownley. She didn't see how he could laugh and joke, but as they were in such a crowd, she was glad he could. If she could have had her way they would have been alone, hand in hand.

"Look out for that white satin!" she called sharply. "We can't have

"Thank Gawd there ain't but two more days of this!" muttered Mrs. Swenson, when she saw her daughter's blooming face on Friday morning.

Ever since she had found the crisp taffeta over a chair and the modish hat on the bureau in Tildy's room, she had felt a growing resentment against Providence and Louis Herkimer. Didn't Herkimer know that girls were crazy over finery and admiration? And girls like Tildy who never had had either— It wasn't fair! It wasn't fair to put such temptation in their way. Tildy should never have had the chance to learn that silk stockings did not hurt her feet. Mrs. Swenson was afraid, and she cursed the impotency of mothers, who have nothing to offer their girls in exchange for the glitter and pleasure they ask them to give up, nothing but hard work and poverty. Life was hard enough at the best for girls like Tildy. Why did Providence and Louis Herkimer have to make it harder? If a working girl doesn't do the work she is given,

she loses her job, and without her job—Mrs. Swenson put a soap-shriveled hand to her aching heart. Gawd! Wasn't there temptation enough in the world for a pretty girl without fashion shows? It was because she was afraid that she blurted out to Tildy:

"You won't be play actin' Miss Millions much longer, will you, Tildy? Here it is Friday already."

Friday! Tildy sent a swift, startled glance to her mother. And the fashion show closed on Saturday! The manikins would leave for St. Paul on the late train and she—she would have to go back to the Big Store and sell hose.

Her lip quivered. Oh, it was too hateful! And then she remembered Joe, and the quivering lips



it cleaned every week. Mateel, if you tear that veil I'll skin you!"

tilted at the corners. It wouldn't be for long. And perhaps—Miss LaSalle had hinted something about going with them until Lil left the hospital. That would be too blissful. To travel, to wear beautiful clothes, to see Joe every day! No wonder her face was all dimples and her eyes sparkled. She did not say anything to her mother. She knew very well what Mrs. Swenson would say. Her mother never wanted her to have any fun. But she did speak to Joe when they met for her lunch and his breakfast, as they had met every day.

"You'd like it?" he asked idly.

"It would be heaven!" she told him fervently.

"Nice sort of heaven," he muttered. "To change a fellow's togs a dozen times twice a day. You'd get good and tired of that!"

"I wouldn't be tired bein' with you," she dared to say, trying to be saucy, but the tears *would* slip into her eyes and she could not keep the quaver from her voice.

He looked at her oddly.

"With me? Hell!" He spoke more to himself than to her, and then was silent. He did not say much either as they walked to the Exposition, and that afternoon the picture he presented was of a young gentleman absorbed in weighty matters rather than of a light-hearted young man thinking only of the sport for which he was so correctly garbed.

Tildy's heart was in her mouth. What had she said to displease Joe? She tried to remember. What had happened? She knew it was her fault when he drew Miss LaSalle aside. Her lip trembled and she walked blindly to the dressing room. Why couldn't he tell her? Didn't he know that she lived only to please him? A tear fell on the foamy veil, and she wiped it away with frightened fingers. If Miss LaSalle had seen that!

Over in the men's dressing room Joe had shut the door and was facing Clara LaSalle, a strange expression in his selfish eyes.

"Say, Clara, is it true that you're thinkin' of takin' that baby on in Lil's place?"

Miss LaSalle regarded him curiously.

"Jake thinks it 'ud be a good scheme. She's all right. It's wonderful how she's caught on, an' she's cheap."

"I know." He shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "But look here, Clara, she's—she's such a kid! You know what kind of a life this is. It ain't anythin' for a little girl like Tildy Swenson. Don't take her. Let her go back to the store. We can pick up a girl in St. Paul, an' Tildy—she's too pretty an' in-innocent for this game. You know that. Don't take her!"

"Well, for Gawd's sake!" Miss LaSalle stared at him in astonishment. "What's eatin' you now? Seems if you done your little best to rub the bloom off Tildy Swenson 'fore any one else had a chanct. If you feel like that, why didn't you keep your hands off?" she demanded sharply.

"I dunno," miserably, "any more than I know why I feel this way now. But my hands are off now. Yes, they are! Gawd, when I think—say, Clara, you were young an' fresh once yourself. Let her go!"

Miss LaSalle stiffened with resentment as he insinuated that she was no longer young, but she was kind-hearted, and she could remember when she thought life was all roses and whipped cream.

"All right, Joe," she promised kindly. "If you take it that way, we'll leave her in Waloo."

Joe put his arm around her.

"You're a good old scout, Clara," he choked.

So, on Saturday nothing was said to

Tildy about continuing her rôle of débutante in the fashion drama, and she was nervous. Of course, every one took it for granted that she was going, but she would like to hear it in words. But Miss LaSalle said never a syllable. Neither did Miss Vallière nor the fashion papa, big Jake Evenson.

Saturday night came and nothing had been said. Tildy was in a fever, as she put on the striped skirt and middy blouse for possibly the last time. Surely she was expected to go to St. Paul. She would die if she were left behind. Joe's face wore a set smile as she ran to meet him, her tennis racquet over her shoulder, and the two sauntered down the platform which had been built out into the hall, stopping now and then to swing around so that their clothes might be seen.

"Say," murmured Joe, as they turned to go back. "Don't go with fat Gryton to-night. Let me take you home? I wanta talk to you."

"All right." Immediately her world brightened. She was once more the happy, radiant girl, ready to dance, to ride, to swim, to shop, and last of all, to wed. It was almost more than she could bear to be there now as Joe's bride, and she trembled as she walked slowly forward while the orchestra played the "Lohengrin" bridal chorus. Joe muttered something under his breast as he looked down at her.

"Hurry up and change," he whispered, as soon as the scene was over, "an' we'll get away before any one stops us."

Tildy had the dressing room to herself, and she hurried out of her bridal robes and into the shabby blue serge. Before she left the room she caught the white satin in her arms and hugged it. Then she shut the door behind her and went to meet Joe.

He was waiting at the entrance, and they went up the darkened street together. He walked hurriedly, and she

had to run to keep up with him. He heard her catch her breath and stopped.

"What a brute I am!" He took her hand and held it close. "Say, kid, what do you think of me, anyway?"

Think of him? How could she tell him that he was to her the sun and moon and stars, the whole celestial firmament? She couldn't speak, and he went on in a tired sort of a voice.

"You know, I'm no good. Honest! Ab—so—lu—tely no good! I'm the kind of a fella a girl like you ain't no business with. That's straight!" as she gave a little cry of protest. "There was a time, oh, long ago, when I was as decent as any chap sellin' goods up the Big Store, but I gotta chancet at easy money, an' take it from me, kiddo, there ain't any money that does you the bad the easy does. It ruined me. Yes, it did. I couldn't do a man's work now to save my soul. I couldn't even put on a khaki suit and fight like a man. I was scared stiff of the draft, an' I couldn't believe 't I was one of the lucky ones when I wasn't called. I'm a coward—an' worse. All I'm good for is to put on swell clothes an' smirk an' parade around for folks to see an' make eyes at fool girls. I don't wanta work now. An' that ain't all." He moistened his lips and held her hand tighter. "I gotta wife in a hospital in Chicago. Lil, you know—she's my wife."

"Oh!" Tildy would have pulled her hand free with that anguished cry, but he held it firmly.

"So you see," he went on drearily, "why it is no nice girl, no pretty girl like you, ain't got no business with a fool fella, a coward an' a liar, like me. We've been good pals this week. I shan't ever forget you, an' if you think anythin' of me at all, you'll promise to stop this livin'-model business right now. There's things in life besides wearin' clothes 't somebody else pays for. An' for a pretty girl—well, you take it from me an' stop now! You're better

off sellin' stockin's at the Big Store than you'd be travelin' around with us, gettin' a taste for things you can't have honestly. When I think of what girls like you are up against! You jest naturally like pretty things an' want 'em, but you can pay too much for 'em, kiddo. Gawd! don't turn away from me like that! You don't know how hard it is to tell you this, to keep my hands offen you, to make you hate me! Don't you s'pose I'd rather have you along so's I could see you every day? I'll die without you! But it's for your sake, kiddo—for your own sake, I'm tellin' you what a rotten chap I am!"

To save her life she could not utter a word, but the hand he held was as cold as ice. All the joy had gone from her poor little face. Joe groaned and cursed himself and the fashion show as, under the flare of a street light, he saw what seemed like a mask. She tore her hand from his.

"Here we are," she gasped bravely. "You needn't come any further. Good-by." She threw back her head and faced him.

"Good-by." He put his hands on her shoulders and looked at her. "It's a wrench, Tildy, a wrench! The only clean thing has come into my life in years. I shan't even kiss you. I hadn't any business to do it before, but I didn't understand then. I hope to Gawd you'll be good an' happy, for I'm bad an' damned miserable! Good-by." He released her and turned away.

With a little cry, Tildy ran after him. "It was my fault, too," she sobbed. "I—I wanted you to make love t' me. An' p-please k-kiss me again—jest onct!"

Monday morning found Cinderella back at her place at the hosiery. She looked older than she had looked the day Herkimer and Evenson had chosen her for their débutante. Charlie Thompson saw it and his heart ached. Poor

little kid! He was furious at a management which could make it possible to wipe the youthful radiance from a girl's face as it had been wiped from the face of Tildy Swenson. He smiled at her from across the aisle, and she managed to smile at him. At noon, as he was going out to lunch, he stopped at her counter.

"Say, kid"—he made a desperate attempt to speak as usual—"the Woodmen are goin' to give a swell dance to-night in their new hall. Wanta come an' let me teach you those new steps?"

Once before, he had offered her a similar invitation and she had flouted it. But then life had been all rosy glow, and now that life was a deep, dark blue, she could not laugh. Eagerly she determined to snatch at any pleasure she could have. Then perhaps she could forget.

"Sure, Chas! I'd love to. Thank you for askin'," she said bravely.

"Thank me for nothin'." His gruff voice did not hide his pride in the way she was trying to make the best of life. He choked as he remembered the past week, but he only said, even more gruffly, "'Bout eight-thirty, then?"

She nodded, and tried to remember whether the white voile she had bought at the June sale was clean. It wasn't like the Georgette dancing frock she had worn in the fashion show, she thought drearily, as she turned to find a pair of cordovan hose for a customer. But even if the customer was impatient, Tildy had to glance again at Charlie Thompson as he swaggered down the aisle, looking a whole inch taller than when he had diffidently presented his invitation. He was a man, not a tailor's dummy, not a living model to show off fine clothes which he never could afford to own, she thought passionately, and there was a lump in her throat. Chas Thompson was a model, all right, but a model for a man! A girl could trust Charlie Thompson.



Goodness *and* Gloria

By Victoria Day

Author of "The Code of Honor," "Paying the Debt," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. M. MONTGOMERY

I KNOW you are good! I don't care what they say!" the boy told her earnestly, miserably. "Just because you—you have been raised different from my sisters, an' girls like them—that don't mean nothin'. Besides, they're old—thirty an' twenty-seven. An' you, you're young, an' so—so pretty, Gloria!"

"Who's been sayin' I ain't good?" Gloria wanted to know, with a simulation of anger.

"I—I don't want to tell you. Yes, I will, too. Somebody told my father that before the fact'ry opened here, you'd lived—but I don't believe it. He told my mother, dad did, an' left her to try to make me promise not to go with you any more. He thought mother'd be able to get anything out of me. But—but what she said just sent me right down here to you, Gloria."

"Right down here" was the little riverside nook beyond the Valley Amusement Pavilion, a recess where the glare of its lights did not penetrate, a quiet where the blare of its band was hushed to something almost musical, a place sweet with the breath of honeysuckle, soothing with the wash of little waves. Gloria's face, little, impudent, amusing, a pale triangle between the tightly plastered bands of

blue-black hair, was close to the boy's in the darkness. He looked at it adoringly.

"When they know you, Glory," he whispered, "they'll know how good you are, an' what a lie that was about you—— They've only got to know you!"

"How soon do you think they are going to come around an' to find out how good I am?" Gloria leaned back against the bench, and seemed to mock both him and herself with the question.

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that, Gloria—as if—as if—you didn't believe what you were sayin'. They would come around, they would, they would, if only they knew what a fine girl you were. If only you'd marry me, Gloria! Just as soon as I brought you home, just as soon as they had a chance to know you—oh, Gloria, marry me, marry me! Marry me to-night!"

"An' what," Gloria mocked him, "would we live on?"

"Why, you know well enough. I'm in dad's store. I'll own it some day. He's always said that he'd give the girls their shares in money, so's I could take over the business. And there ain't a better leather and hardware business in the whole valley!" he ended boastfully.

"But suppose your father changed his mind! Fathers have done it before now, you know! Suppose he said, when you took me around to the house—you're livin' home, you see—suppose he said: 'Take your bride out of here, and don't come around to the store in the morning. All is over between us.' Suppose he said that, Billy boy—what would the answer be?"

"He wouldn't," Billy declared stressfully. "You don't know dad. Why—why he counts on me!"

"What does he give you a week?" she asked relentlessly.

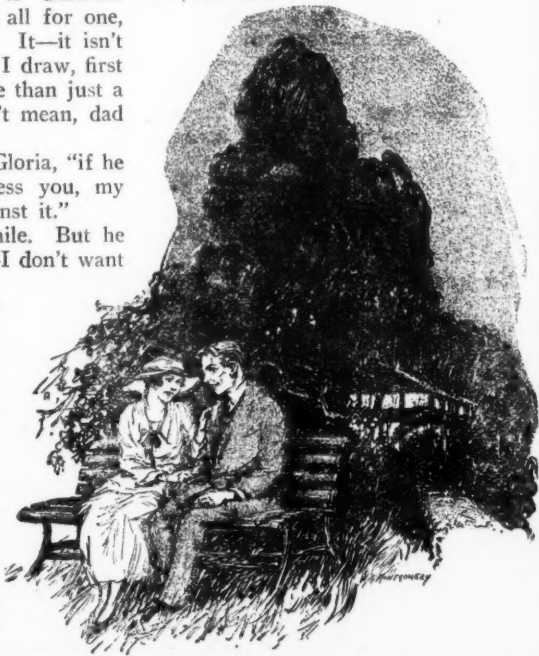
He flushed and stuttered as he replied:

"Oh, he lets me have anything I want. I—I just tell him. Wait, wait a minute, Gloria! It isn't like you think. He'd give me a salary, of course. But our family—our family is different from some families. It's all for one, and one for all, with us. It—it isn't that dad's mean. I guess I draw, first and last, a good deal more than just a salary would be. He ain't mean, dad ain't."

"Just the samey," said Gloria, "if he didn't happen to say 'bless you, my children,' we'd be up against it."

"Maybe, for a little while. But he will say it. They—they—I don't want to sound silly—but they are awful fond of me, all of them. You see, I was the youngest. My next sister was seven when I came. They—they weren't looking for me. An' then, my bein' sort of delicate, too. They are all awful fond of me—the girls, too. You should have seen how relieved they were when I couldn't pass for the army, and yet, how sorry they were for me. Oh, Gloria, they'll love you! They'd

love you for my sake, even if—even if — But they will love you for your own. People in a little town like this are mean. They haven't got any breadth. Everything that is strange to them they think is crooked, some way. And so—your comin' here like you did, you see, just droppin' off the train, an' gettin' a job in the munitions, an' stayin' on after, an' all—not knowin' anybody they knew— An' then, of course, some of the munitions girls were—were what they say— But I know you are good! I honor you for the way you worked! I—I—" He broke off with a half sob, and buried his face against the shoulder of her lawn dress, which exuded heavy perfumes. Gloria patted his head, looking at him out of strange, hard, pitying, dark eyes. By and by, still holding his face against her, she said:



"Who's been sayin' I ain't good?" Gloria wanted to know.

"Suppose I wasn't good, Billy boy. Suppose I wasn't—hadn't been—would you love me then? Would you want to marry me?"

He struggled against her soft, detaining hand upon his head. Finally he won away from her embrace, straightened, looked at her.

"But you are!" he told her. "What's the good of talkin' about it? You are! You are! Don't you suppose I can tell? I'm a man, ain't I? Wouldn't I know if you—if you weren't straight?"

She smiled a little mistily at the boy's face so young, so unformed, so indignant in the dim night. All the ages looked out of her own dark eyes—all the ages, with their knowledge and their experience and their pity.

"Listen, Gloria," he went on, his words falling over one another in his eagerness, "you'll love my mother and she'll love you. An', an' I thought it would be kinder nice for the first few months if we lived on at home. They'd give us the whole third floor, I know they would, an' you'd have a sittin' room, with mornin'-glories on the wall paper. Ever since I knew you an' that your name was Glory, I've been wantin' to see you in a room with mornin'-glory paper. An' that way, with us livin' at home, I mean, all the folks in town would get to know you an' how—how fine an' sweet you were, an' then, maybe, in the spring, dad would let us put up a bungalow at the end of the orchard. Wouldn't it be sweet, Glory? Just yours an' mine. With a little piazza. An' some day—some day—oh, my dear, a little, white baby carriage out there, an' you lookin' into it, just the same as my mother looked into mine twenty years ago. Glory!"

She was pushing him away.

"I—I feel funny—sick or something," she murmured. "I—I've got to go in. No, no, I don't want you to walk home with me. I—want to walk by myself. I'll feel better. Oh, well, then, walk along with me, but don't, please don't talk any more. I—I feel queer. Don't speak to me. No, no, no! Can't you hear me? I don't want anything but to be left alone!"

They went along toward the big, barrackslike boarding house where some of the munitions girls had lodged, and where a few still remained, pursuing such industries as still offered. She promised to see him the first thing in the morning. She kissed him, hard, fiercely, in the shelter of the door, before she disappeared.

In the morning she was gone and there was no word from her, except what the boarding-house keeper was moved to utter.

"Yes, she paid up an' left on the first train this mornin'. No great loss, at that! Not that she was as bad as some of them, though—she paid her way. Easy come, easy go, I always said of their money, the munitions girls an'—others. But she was kinder nice with children. Used to amuse the baby by the hour. A woman ain't all bad, I always say, if she keeps a right spot in her heart for children, an' Gloria did that. Wouldn't stand for no loose talk before them, or anything. Oh, there was many worse than her. An' yet they say that, over in Jersey, where she come from, she was in a home for incorrigibles before she was fourteen an'— Well, of all the manners!"

Indignant, amazed, she addressed the circumambient air. "An' Willie Beasley used to be such a nice-mannered boy!"



The Blot on the 'Scutcheon

By DuVernet Rabell

Author of "The Three-Cornered Kingdom," "When Satan Was Sick," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

**Anne is about sixteen and deliciously sophisticated.
You will delight in these heart affairs of hers.**

YES," Trixie, my stepmother, used to say, "Anne has a happy disposition and a sweet forgiving nature—but she carries a long knife!"

But I don't think that this was really so. Just one of Trixie's clever sayings. Although, of course, a girl can't afford to let people get away with everything—especially a man. Still, in all, it's wisest to abide by the letter of the proverbs—that is when it's possible to do so. I've come to the conclusion that the proverbs weren't written as a best seller is, to pander to the popular taste because they really mean something. Not only that, they prove nine times out of ten, like a problem in geometry. Now take my case. I've quoted 'Revenge is sweet'—oh, any number of times, laughing or regretfully or with an air of worldly wisdom, as the occasion might demand; but it is only lately that I have acknowledged its truth. 'Revenge is sweet'. It can be *too* sweet.

Trixie was doubtful when aunt Katherine wrote that she wanted to take me to the prom at Culverton Military Academy. But I cried to daddy and he said that, after all, it was only a "kid" affair, so Trixie, who didn't get a sable coat and a string of pearls and a Raynier-Carton limousine by entering the fray with the odds against her, shrugged her shoulders and ordered me two new dancing frocks, one rose and the other yellow, and bought me a muff to match my pointed fox neckpiece.

Aunt Katherine, who is a great reader

and so much in demand as a chaperon, was taking down three other girls, all very nice, I guess. I didn't talk to them much on the train going down because it was the first prom I had ever been invited to, although I knew all about them, as Doris, my older cousin, who is not only a beauty, but rich in her own name, is always going to them.

We arrived in Culverton about four and drove in sleighs over to the hotel which is on the Academy grounds. The place was all lighted up and I never saw so many girls and men in uniform in my life. Trixie gurgles when I call them "men," but goodness knows I passed the boy stage when I put up my hair! Some of the girls who were drinking tea about the tea tables or scattered about in the long room, wore suits and some had on light afternoon dresses, and most of them wore flowers. Of course, Rex, being my cousin, had not considered it necessary to provide me with any flowers. Fortunately, I had anticipated his thoughtlessness and mentioned to Jimmy Lane—Jimmy lives next door and is around our house a great deal—that I hoped I could keep some of the lilies he had sent me for my birthday fresh to wear at Culverton, they were so beautiful. And, of course, after that he sent me a great sheaf of roses.

I didn't take off my hat or furs when we went down to tea because I noticed in the mirror in my room that the red

wing in my dark blue hat just matched the red the wind had whipped into my cheeks.

The first man I met was Clayton Holmes, and I saw before we had been talking five minutes that he was the kind of man that the girls go mad over. He was very self-possessed and had a hint of recklessness, wildness, almost dissipation, about him that no really "nice" boy ever achieves, and he talked to every girl as if her appearance in his life was the one thing of importance that had ever happened to him, and to every man as if he bored him to death. The girls all looked up at him and laughed at everything he said, or flashed their eyes and nodded when he made an epigram. I didn't. I rather fancy the limelight myself.

A little before six, when the chaperons were gathering the girls up with their eyes, the door was flung open and the most attractive cadet came in. He had red hair, twinkly blue eyes, and he wasn't tall; in fact, he was rather chunky; but he did look so jolly. His name was Peanuts—at least that's what everybody called him. He was the type of boy that just naturally would be called something besides his name.

Just as he was introduced to me, somebody began to play the "Louisiana Loop" on the piano, and he caught me around the waist and started to dance. And then everybody was dancing.

"You certainly are one little trotter!" Peanuts said to me.

"The answer to that is," I laughed, "that you are such a wonderful dancer yourself that any one could trot with you."

"Quick on the comeback, aren't you?" He did a little new step which, fortunately, I didn't miss. Ordinarily I hate temperamental dancing, especially with a man like Peanuts, a man who keeps up a running fire of chatter that you have to think of quick answers to.

Then one of the chaperons stopped

the music—isn't it funny how some people have a positive gift for taking the gayety out of an occasion? So we stopped dancing, and Peanuts said:

"If I find I'm not down for enough trots on your card to-night, will you cut a few and give them to me?"

I opened my eyes wide.

"Certainly not," I said. Then I added, just to let him see that—well, you know what I mean. I liked him—and I couldn't see the harm in—well, anyway, I added, "How could I?"

"How could you?" He grinned down at me, actually grinned. "Cinch! I'm betting that as a fixer you're in a class by yourself."

I laughed and turned round to find Mr. Holmes at my elbow.

"I'm to have the honor of the first dance to-night," he told me rather stiffly. Then he looked at Peanuts. "That is, if you remember my existence on earth."

"I'll try to," I promised him, smiling sweetly, "but if it should slip my mind, just remind me, won't you?"

He deftly stepped between Peanuts and me.

"I'm not accustomed to having girls dance away from me when I'm talking to them, as you did just now," he informed me, frowning.

He wasn't good looking, this Clayton Holmes, but when he frowned like this and set his chin there was something commanding about him. And every girl is inclined to fall for this. Either she is the ivy-leaf type who likes to be domineered over, or she's the kind, somebody—Browning, I think—wrote about. Remember? "I was ever a fighter, so one fight more—" I merely turned away and drawled over my shoulder:

"Really?"

Doris had prepared me for the fact that things move along pretty rapidly at these proms—time is so short, you know, only three or four days—but I

certainly was a little surprised to hear what Mr. Holmes said to Rex when my cousin asked him if he thought I was pretty, and if he thought we'd get along.

"She's got me going West," Mr. Holmes said solemnly. "But she's not pretty, and she's spoiled to death. Still, there's something—a fellow can't place it or tell what it is exactly, but he knows it's there."

"Well," Rex chuckled, "if you can't tell what it is, Heaven help the rest of us!"

From which I judged, as I went upstairs to dress, that this Mr. Holmes had had plenty of experience with the fair sex.

I had a wonderful time at the dance that night. There was a grand march—all colored lights and fancy figures, and at the end no music but the snare drum. The handsomest man at the Academy, Kenneth Wyeth, led the march, and I had my first waltz with him. Certainly I had no fault to find with Rex in the matter of my partners. Everybody on my card could either dance like a breeze or was good looking or something on the track team or played football.

And then, just at the end of the dance, when my program was all mixed up and Rex was furious, Harry Lambert was brought up! And that ended the dance as far as I was concerned. I hardly remember another thing about it, except that Clayton Holmes murmured something about "your eyes are like twin stars" when he said good night, and that Kenneth Wyeth took one of my gloves, a pretty enough sentiment, but which I knew perfectly well wouldn't prevent Trixie taking the cost of a new pair out of my allowance.

The next morning there was a hockey match and Harry played, in a white woolly sweater that made him look like a picture on a magazine; and in the afternoon, in the riding ring, they had

an exhibition of the famous Black Horse Troop. I had seen them escorting governors and things in parades at home in Chicago, and I had seen their pictures at the horse show, but this was so thrillingly close. And Harry Lambert commanded them! Ordinarily I flatter myself that I am a calm enough person, but Harry—oh, if you could have seen him standing up on two black horses that were tearing like mad around the tan bark, no coat on, the collar of his silk shirt rolled away from his brown neck, you wouldn't have forgotten him in a hurry, I can tell you that!

Later there was tea at the commandant's, a more or less formal affair. I wore my gray taffeta. Peanuts and Rex, and Mr. Wyeth and I were walking across the parade ground talking about Mr. Lambert's riding.

"He rides like a—a—" It was maddening, but I couldn't for the life of me think of the name. "I forget," I finished helplessly, "but I know it begins with P."

They all started to guess.

"Pegasus?" Peanuts tried. "No—go on, Rex, it's your turn."

"I hate guessing games," Rex said, and Mr. Wyeth took a hand.

"Charioteer? Jockey?" Give up. What's the difference anyhow?"

But there was lots of difference to me. You know how maddening it is to forget something of importance like this. Then it came to me.

"I know," I exclaimed joyfully. "It's centaur!"

"And she said it began with P!" And Peanuts threw his hands up in the air.

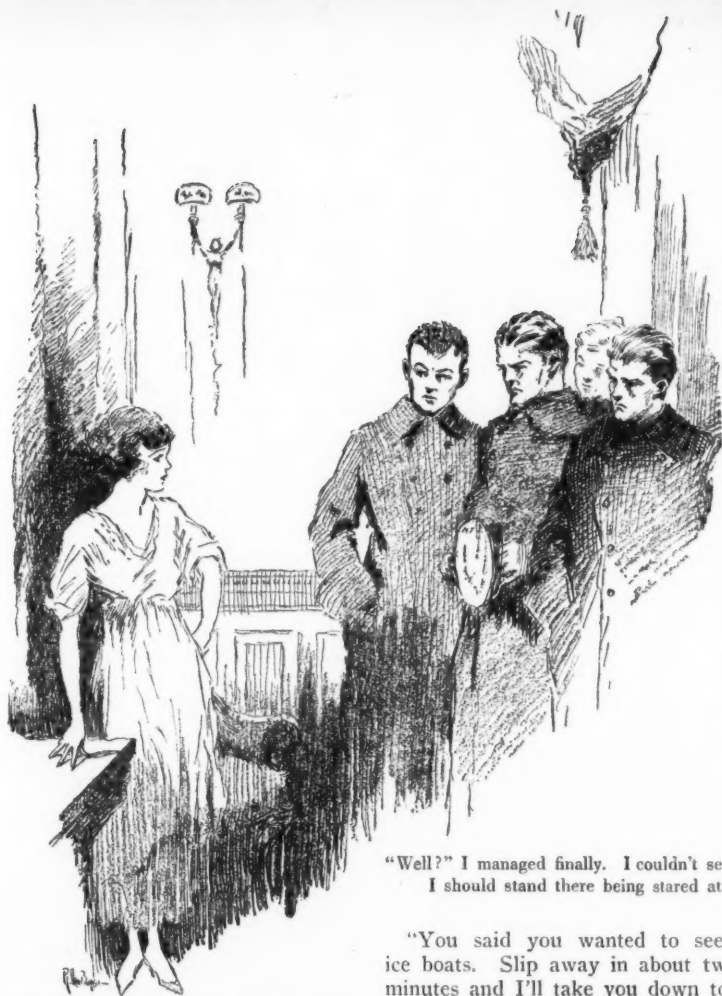
"The X is silent," Rex told him.

"As in 'cow,'" Wyeth added.

We were all laughing when Harry himself came up.

"Going to drink tea?" Mr. Wyeth asked him.

"Why——" he hesitated and looked



at me—"I've got to go down to the boathouse and get my skis some time."

Peanuts grasped my arm.

"Well, don't let us detain you—so long," said life.

But Harry walked along with us, and when we were standing on the porch at the commandant's, he said in a low tone to me:

"Well?" I managed finally. I couldn't see why I should stand there being stared at.

"You said you wanted to see the ice boats. Slip away in about twenty minutes and I'll take you down to the lake."

Something jumped inside of me. I wanted to go, and the slipping away to meet him made me want to go all the more, but I didn't see how I was going to manage.

"Oh, that's all right, I'll fix it with Rex," Harry reassured me.

And he did. In twenty minutes I was

called to the telephone, and when I went into the hall, thinking it was aunt Katherine from the hotel, there was Harry waiting for me, and no telephone message at all.

"I don't think I should have done this," I said, as we hurried along.

"Well, do you want to go back?" said he.

I pouted at him.

"Don't be silly. One of the main reasons I came is that I shouldn't have."

"That's right, take as much pleasure out of this as you can for me. Don't let me get the idea that you came to talk to *me*—nothing like that!"

I smiled at him from under the brim of my hat.

"What do you want me to say to that?"

"The truth."

"Oh, a girl never tells the truth—about some things."

"Now, listen," he said. We had reached the boathouse and he spread a rug on a bench for me to sit on. "Now, listen here, Miss Anne Thorne—I think I'll call you Anne because you are too little and cute to be called Miss Anything. Listen to me, Anne. That sort of talk is all very well for Clayton and Ken Wyeth. Ken needs taking down because he's too stuck on himself anyhow; and Clayton likes a girl to fence with him. But I'm not that way. I don't like girls much and I don't have much to do with them. But I like you. I wouldn't have come to the dance at all, if I hadn't passed the window of the hotel and seen you. I muddled your program up so that I could get a dance."

I didn't know what to say. It was nice to have the handsomest man in the Academy asking you for your picture, and I liked having Clayton Holmes saying he meant to write to me and that polite little girls always answered letters, and even Peanuts,

eternally at my heels, was flattering. But to have a *woman hater*—and you could see that Harry was sincere when he said he didn't like girls—to have a man like *this* "fall for you"—well, this really made the whole prom perfect!

"Well," I began, smoothing the fur on my muff, "I'm glad you like me, and that you like to dance with me——" I stopped and looked up at him—and then away. I had just learned to do this. It's simple, but effective.

He held out his hand.

"Then we are going to be friends?"

"Why, yes." And I slipped my hand into his.

"For now," he added.

"For now?" I looked up in surprise.

"Friends will do," he said, and then went on, "to start with."

We never did look at the ice boats. We seemed to find so much to talk about. About why he didn't like girls—they were such a double-crossing lot, he said—and the boys I knew at home—he had asked me about the roses and I told him about Jimmy Lane. It was so easy to talk to him, and we had such a good time that I hated to suggest going back, but there was no use in giving him the impression that in his presence I forgot the time, place, and day of the week. I much prefer to be on the *me-and-thee* terms with a man—the terms on which he gets furious if he finds another man there the day he calls; the terms on which you can cut out two of his dances, and still be reasonably sure that he'll call up the next morning and apologize for something he didn't do. As my best friend, Bunny Steele, says: "Plato is all very well, but I'll bet they didn't teach it in Cleopatra's school."

The three days at the Academy just flew. I managed to get in four fairly thrilling farewells and left, promising to come back for June Week.

I began paving the way for this the

minute I got home. Trixie wasn't any too promising about it.

"Don't you see, Anne," she objected, "if you get running about now, when you come out there will be nothing for you to come out to? Why, you have still another year at school."

"I know," I argued, "but surely, Trixie, you don't want to bring me out totally lacking in experience? Surely you want me to be a success?"

"Of course I do. But a *débutante's* chief charm is her ingenuousness, her very lack of experience."

"Um," I told her. "Well, successful ingenuousness is like these unsophisticated evening gowns. They look simple, but it takes years of experience to create them."

Trixie made no comment; she just half smiled and went back to her reading.

"But can I go?" I persisted, trying to pin her down to something.

But she only fluttered the pages of her book while I fidgeted about the room. "I'll think about it," she conceded finally. "These 'kids', as your father calls them, probably don't count, and, after all, June doesn't come but once." Whatever she meant by that! I expect a lot of Junes to come for me.

I looked forward all winter to my week in Culverton. Finally Trixie said I could go and then spoiled it all by being obstinate about my clothes. She wouldn't let me have one silk dress—just wash summer things, two nets, one dotted swiss, and an organdie. And for a girl going away to bring to a successful culmination four vital affairs that she had kept going all winter with letters and frat pins and school pennants and fudge, these grammar-school dresses were ridiculous!

All the way down on the train I looked out of the window and visualized the scene, or rather the four scenes. Of course, Clayton would do

it the best. The things he said would probably be well worth remembering all my life, like a poem I had once loved to read. Then I thought how handsome Kenneth would look, and my heart actually yearned over Peanuts—Peanuts serious for once. And Harry—well, somehow I could not seem to get my scene with Harry planned. My heart would begin to beat fast and I'd feel my cheeks burning. I hoped that none of them would want to kiss me. I don't care much about being kissed.

Oh, that week! We arrived in time for Retreat and aunt Katherine and I stood under the trees that ring the parade ground and watched the boys swing by in their dress uniforms. Company after company lined up behind the colors, every one stiff as a statue, the sun catching the light from their buckles, the line swinging up to the commandant to present their reports. Then the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner" and I stood there, my eyes filled with tears, thinking how glorious it was going to be to marry a soldier.

I shall never forget that June Week in Culverton. The trees were all out and the lilacs in bloom all along the walk between the hotel and the Academy. Also, there was a moon on the lake and one of the girl's had a perfectly lovely voice and she used to sing Tosti's "Good-by" out in a canoe, when Harry and I were sitting on a big rock at the end of the point. Oh, it was all so beautiful! No wonder every other man you knew wanted to marry you.

"Yes," Harry said gloomily, "a moon, the sound of water, and a girl—how they do play the devil with a fellow!"

I laughed softly.

"Yes, laugh!" Harry said savagely. "What does it all mean to you—the moon—the lake—that girl out there singing good-by?"

"They mean," I said dreamily, "they mean so many beautiful things that I can't put them into just words!"

"Won't you try?" Harry begged.

But I shook my head.

"I couldn't."

"That's the trouble with you," Harry complained, most unreasonably, I thought. "You never can, or rather you never *will* put anything into words. You won't say *anything*."

"Say anything—oh, Harry, do I need to *say* anything?"

"Well," he went on sulkily, "a fellow likes to *know*——"

"Know what?"

"Why—oh, hang it all—whether a girl cares for him or not."

"Can't he understand without saying?" I asked.

"Yes, he can, and he has the satisfaction of thinking that half a dozen men may be understanding the same thing. Oh, you needn't lift your chin like that. I'm not blind, you know. Don't I see you smile at Ken Wyeth? Don't you let Clayton talk to you by the hour? And even Peanuts—why, the kid's off his head! It makes me wild!"

I looked at him coldly. When a man starts to edit your list of friends it's time to check him right then.

"Do you propose that I give up——"

"No, I don't. I wouldn't waste my breath. But you needn't—you needn't *flirt* with them."

I touched his arm.

"Oh, Harry, foolish boy, what does that mean—just flirting?"

"It means anything, the way you do it."

"But have you noticed, Harry," I questioned softly, "that I don't flirt—with you?"

He turned and caught my hand.

"Anne—oh, Anne, do you——"

But I decided that things had gone far enough and, in spite of Harry's protestations, declared that I had to go back, that it was very late and aunt Katherine didn't like my being off the hotel veranda after dark.

"Yes," Harry remarked bitterly, "any time you don't want to do anything you say aunt Katherine wouldn't like it!"

Of course, in looking back on it now, viewing the whole thing dispassionately, so to speak, I can see that I was overconfident. That's the trouble with a girl who gets the idea that she is clever. When she isn't being clever she's being inordinately stupid.

During the winter I had had some little snapshots taken. It would have been perfectly useless for me to have asked Trixie to let me send my picture to any of the boys. She'd have had a fit and she'd very probably have gone to daddy about it. So when some one gave Ethel Ferguson a kodak for a birthday present and she started taking every one's picture on the block, I brushed my hair high one afternoon and went out into the side yard and let her take a picture of me. I borrowed Trixie's high-heeled pumps with the cut-steel buckles on them. The picture was very good, too, although it didn't look in the least like me. But it was effective. My hair was all blowing and I was laughing over the top of my fur collar. It looked like these pictures taken of the actresses in their homes.

After the proper interval, and after the proper sort of letters, I sent one to Peanuts, and one to Kenneth, and just a week before I went down, one to Clayton. Of course, I bound them all to secrecy—my father would be furious; I'd never given my picture to a man before; the sort of thing that's fitting to say under these circumstances. I didn't send one to Harry. Rex had told me when he came home to go to the dentist's that the picture he had of me—it was a lovely picture, too, in a big hat, looking down at a rose—had mysteriously disappeared from his room. Then he mentioned that Harry Lambert was a regular porch climber and let it go at that. I reflected that it pleased me to know that Harry's

picture was in a graver mood. Harry and I—well, Harry was different. I had been to an exhibition of battle pictures that afternoon, and it was Harry's face I saw in the faces of the heroes.

I can't say that any of the scenes I had planned so carefully lived up to my expectations of them. Clayton talked too eloquently—you somehow got the idea of an actor, letter-perfect in a familiar part—and Peanuts, even though he was plainly glad to see me, was rather silly; and Kenneth evidently expected to have me fall into his arms at his first word, and was very disagreeable when I wouldn't. Harry and I didn't have a scene at all. He just took my hand and looked down into my eyes and showed me my last letter in the pocket of his shirt, over his heart. That was really better than a scene. I was fond of Harry—I had told all the girls about him, and canceled his name with mine—you know, writing his name down under mine and then crossing out the common letters and saying: indifference, love, friendship, hate, with the ones that are left? And his came out "indifference" and mine "hate!" I couldn't understand it. I did it over and over again, but it never would come out any other way.

I told Peanuts that he must graduate before he was even to speak to me of anything serious; and I teased Kenneth and said that while I liked him oh, ever so much, I'd have to think twice before marrying a man as handsome as he was. Clayton was more difficult, when I declared sadly that he was too interested in the fair sex, or they in him, to be safe for a girl like me, for I'd care too much and he'd care too little or not long enough. Of course, all this could mean anything or nothing, but it was just as fair to them as to me.

Then—and isn't it funny how small, unimportant things can upset the face of the world?—Peanuts had words with

Kenneth over a trivial matter like his bath towel. Rex, who certainly had no interest in the affair that I can see, must take a hand, and that brought in his roommate, Clayton. Only Heaven knows how my name ultimately entered into the discussion—it certainly had no place there—and again, only Heaven knows why Harry chose this moment to saunter down the corridor.

In happy ignorance of all this, I was up in my room in the hotel looking over my dresses. I had kept a pink ruffled organdie fresh for the dance the hotel was giving to open its summer season. For, after the Academy closed for the summer, the hotel on Lake Maxintucke became like any other summer hotel, with hops, and music on the porch in the mornings, and bridge tournaments. The place was crowded, mostly with people from Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, who came there every summer. No men to speak of, and only one girl who was at all noticeable. She wore shepherdess hats and went walking by herself with a rose-lined parasol and highbrow-looking books in her hand. Rex, for what reason I don't know, looked up her name in the register and found out that it was Miss Morgan, Clarice Morgan. The Morgan was all right, but Clarice sounded stogy to me.

I had just decided that the pink organdie would do very well if I could rip out the last tuck and get it below my ankles, when word was brought to me that a gentleman wanted to see me in the music room. That's what the boy said—a gentleman. I had no warning whatever of what was before me.

I gave a pat to my hair and ran down the stairs. I went into the little music room, and stopped short. Clayton Holmes, Peanuts, Kenneth Wyeth, and Harry were all in there. They were all standing, and when I came into the room, they wheeled and looked at me. They had just come from a review. It was sort of cold and they wore their

overcoats. They looked so tall. They looked stern, too—even Peanuts didn't have a sign of a smile.

I waited a minute. Then I stopped smiling. Nobody said anything, but somehow a chill wind seemed to lift the roots of my hair, and I had something inside of me where I had always supposed my heart to be that felt cold and hard and shiny—like a china Easter egg.

"Well?" I managed finally, I couldn't see why

I should stand there being glared at. They didn't look at one another and they never said a word, and just as if they had rehearsed it—they may have, for all I knew, boys are so mean—they all stepped up to the table and put something on the marble top.

As I stood there, looking down at the table, the strangest feeling took possession of me, a numb sort of sensation. I couldn't seem to think or even to feel. And yet I was acutely conscious of everything about me—those stern-faced boys, the lilac bush waving its purple plumes outside the window, the sound of croquet balls on the lawn, and the room—I never will forget that room! It had green-and-gold paper—



There sat that siren girl and—Harry Lambert! They didn't see me. Goodness knows they wouldn't have seen anybody unless he walked right up and got in the swing with them!

little gold harps on it—and stiff little gold chairs.

My eyes fixed on the table. There was Clayton's watch and Peanut's watch, and a locket belonging to Kenneth, and a queer sort of fob with a sliding back that Harry always wore. And inside of each of them, I didn't have to look to know it, was my picture.

Nobody said a word, and the minutes ticked away on the big clock out in the hall. It was a shivery "forever-never" ticking.

Then Peanuts, in response to a nudge from Kenneth, said:

"Well, it seems as if there was some explanation due."

"From me?" I asked.

This apparently was not the cue that Peanuts was waiting for, but he nodded.

Then I took myself in hand.

"Explanations?" I actually laughed. It wasn't a very happy laugh, but it had a ripple in it that might have passed for amusement. Slowly my eyes traveled from one face to another. "Oh, perhaps," I drawled. "An explanation may be due *one* of you, but not all."

Each of them looked at the other. Then Clayton shrugged and Peanuts laughed a most unpleasant laugh. Then, with one accord, they all marched to the door.

"Take your trinkets with you," I called, and suddenly I found that my terror was all gone. I was just plain furious, and when Harry, who was last, turned around, my eyes just blazed at him.

"I hope you are proud of yourself," I sneered. "Four big, strong men against one girl!"

He stood, staring at me, his brows in a straight line, but he didn't say anything.

"A very pretty, very clever trick, wasn't it?"

"Apparently *you* don't think *you* have done anything at all!"

Pride was my only raft in this wild and turbulent sea.

"Certainly I don't. Why should I?"

Harry bowed.

"Why, indeed?" And then he went out and closed the door behind him.

I felt as if I had been standing on a platform at a great height and some one had taken the floor away, and that I was falling, falling miles into a bottomless pit.

But when I got upstairs I felt better. I realized I didn't care at all about the other men. They might be angry, amused, hurt—anything. I didn't care. But I did care about Harry, and because I cared I was sure I could explain everything to him. When a girl really cares for a man it sharpens her wits. Self-preservation or something like that.

I walked over to the bed and picked up my pink dress. I was glad, as I looked at it, that Trixie had insisted on it being short and that she had put the white frill around the neck. I had called it babyish at the time. But now I was glad it was. I felt that when I saw Harry that night I could look up at him and smile appealingly, and tell him about how it came to happen. He might be angry for a little while, but in the end he would reflect that he was a man and I was a girl, young, thoughtless, impulsive—in fact, that I really needed some one to take care of me, keep me out of trouble.

While we were having dinner, the Morgan girl appeared in the dining room. You would have thought, the way she trailed across the room and the way people looked up from their dinners to stare at her, that she was a personage. She had on a peacock-colored crape meteor—fancy, for a summer dance!—and a red rose tucked into her hair—she had nice hair, dull gold—and gold slippers. I would not have

called her even pretty; but interesting—yes, I dare say she looked interesting. She had a slow, curved smile, and just that touch of mystery, dead dreams or something, in her eyes, that men find so fascinating. And it was perfectly plain that she went to a good dress-maker.

After dinner I went up and put a rose in my own hair and borrowed some of aunt Katherine's lip rouge. Also, I considered putting on my cream net—the skirt was longer. But no, I decided that my first idea was best.

I was running down the short hall that led to the back porch of the hotel, when I heard voices. As I turned back, I saw two people sitting in the swing. The light from the moon was right on them. There sat that siren girl and—Harry Lambert! They didn't see me. Goodness knows they wouldn't have seen anybody unless he walked right up and got in the swing with them!

The hop was a perfectly ghastly affair. I can't look back on it even now without a wave of disappointment, anger, and tears, sweeping over me. Clayton hadn't come at all—fancy! after taking all my waltzes—and Kenneth, without consulting me, shifted all his dances to a silly little second-year man, who couldn't dance at all; and Peanuts simply skipped his. Harry claimed his dances. I wished he hadn't. I was sweet to him. I said I was sorry and I wished it hadn't happened, but if he'd let me explain— And I *did* explain—yes, I actually did, and smiled up at him and said again that I was sorry. Of course, I know better now.

Harry heard me through to the end and then he smiled—smiled, mind you!—and told me not to worry.

"It doesn't seem to be worrying you," I remarked tartly.

"Oh, no," he replied absently, watching the peacock lady glide by in the arms of some man with gray hair.

Oh, he was pleasant enough. But he

had very little to say. And his silence was not the silence of embarrassment or anger or hurt pride—then I could have done something—but his silence was one of ease and self-possession and utter indifference.

And always he looked at that siren in the peacock dress! And she smiled at him, that slow, lazy smile, and he brought her lemonade and held her gloves while she sat in secluded corners, a bunch of purple iris in her hand that I knew Harry had picked for her down by the lake. And there was certainly something uncannily alluring in the way she nibbled the petals. Her lips were so red, so soft looking—oh, irresistible! Not that Harry was making the slightest effort to resist.

I was ready enough to go upstairs at ten-thirty. I took off my pink dress—it was almost as fresh as when I put it on—and left it in a little heap in the middle of the floor. I curled up in bed and lay for hours listening to the music and trying to cry.

We left in a couple of days. Harry was around most of the time, trailing at the Morgan girl's heels, carrying her book or her parasol, or turning her music when she sang French songs that I thought were very—well, too full of ardor to sing to a man.

We went home early in the morning. I didn't say good-by to Harry, and I'm quite sure he didn't even know I'd gone.

The following fall Trixie and daddy went to Europe, and Doris came to stay at our house, ostensibly to look after me, although Delia, my nurse—I called her my maid after my eighteenth birthday—took care of us both. It was nice having Doris in the house. She used to give me her second-day flowers and most of her candy—what with these medieval gowns, no girl can risk getting fat—and sometimes she used to let me help her entertain the men she didn't care about. And then, too, I substituted.

If there was a girl short at a dinner or a box party, they asked me to fill in. Doris told me about the forks and things, and when to take off my gloves, and the things to talk about at the theater. I managed very nicely, too.

I gradually ceased to waste my time with the boys. I even patronized Jimmy Lane who was a junior at Princeton, and before the winter came to an end I had been petted into an opinion of myself sufficiently flattering to give me a calm air of sweet assurance. Then Doris got herself engaged. He was an awfully nice man by the name of Henry Lavery. He was much older than Doris, very distinguished, and with even more money than she had, which was fortunate as there are always some sweet souls who will say that a girl is being married for her money. He was something in the Senate, and people said that he was in line for the presidency.

Being engaged gave Doris a little more time, because Henry didn't care an awful lot about going about, and being very happy made her look around to see if she could get any of her friends engaged, too. Nice girls do this. One day we got very confidential and for some reason or other I told her about Harry Lambert.

"Of course, it's all over, and I have ceased to even think about him now, much less care for him," I said. "Still, it's the one blot on my 'scutcheon. I'd like to clear it off, too."

Doris yawned and held up her engagement ring so that it caught the light.

"Maybe you'll have a chance to some time," she said. She smiled at me in the mirror. "What an inflammable little creature you are, with your brown eyes and crooked little pixie smile!"

But the idea of getting quits with Harry Lambert had taken hold of me. I couldn't seem to get it out of my mind; although I suppose ultimately I

would have forgotten it, if that very afternoon I had not received a letter from Rex. He had gone down to Culverton to see Peanuts graduate. He wrote that most of the old class who were able to get there, were down, and he mentioned Harry Lambert. For all he looked so well in a uniform and had such a commanding presence, Harry hadn't gone into the army. He was with a firm of architects in St. Paul, and was doing very well. He was expecting to spend his vacation, the latter part of June, at the lake, and Rex thought he would join him.

It happened in the most opportune way that the Henessy girls asked Doris up to their place on Lake Geneva for the last two weeks in June, and she didn't know what to do with me. So, having ascertained that Rex was not going to Lake Maxintucke to join Harry, I suggested that she let Delia take me down there, and she brightened and said it was just the thing.

"Doris," I asked her suddenly, "will you let me take one or two of your dresses with me? I'll be very careful of them. My things are all too short and—young."

She was going out of my room, but she stopped and whirled around.

"Why, for goodness' sake?" Then she burst out laughing. She laughed and laughed, and threw herself on the bed and buried her face in the pillows. But presently she sat up. She was serious, except for the dimple coming and going in her cheek. "I certainly will," she amazed me by saying. "For the honor of my sex. Come on in my room and we'll pick them out."

And while we were picking them out, my plan fully matured. I didn't know whether to tell Doris or not, but I thought I'd better, because she might not like my borrowing her diamond ring without asking her, and anyway, I wanted her to show me how to make up my eyes like Mona Lisa's—you

know the idea that "she had looked upon the world and her eyelids were a little heavy."

Doris selected a trailing gray crape and she very sweetly left on the train; a blue serge with nunlike collars and cuffs; a love of rose chiffon wrap, and—oh, joy of joys!—her black tulle with the jet straps over the shoulders!

"I'm going to shorten this," she said, "and loan you my red satin slippers; but for the love of goodness don't sprain your ankle with these heels!"

I met Harry Lambert in the upper hall of the hotel the evening I arrived. It was dusk and the hall was shadowed, and I didn't look at him at all. But I had on my black tulle—first impressions are so important. My neck was bare, and my arms, and he looked at me, looked again, and then stopped.

"Anne—why, Anne!" he said.

I stopped and looked up at him. Then I dropped the book I was carrying. But I didn't say anything. I felt that this scene required finesse.

"Why, Anne—you haven't forgotten me?" And he smiled and held out his hand.

I kept my eyes fixed on his face. Now I pressed one hand to my heart and made a quick gesture with the other.

"Forgotten you? No, I haven't—but I thought you were miles away. I—I——" My voice broke and I turned blindly away. "Oh, why did it have to be you—why did it have to be you?"

Then I didn't come down to the dining room for supper and when, the next morning, I walked out on the porch, in a lovely lilac linen, I was not surprised to see Harry sitting near the door.

"I was wondering what had become of you," he said.

He was just as attractive in white flannel as he had been in his uniform; it made his eyes darker than ever, and

his hair sleeker. I couldn't help but marvel at his sang-froid. You would have thought we had parted on the best of terms.

I smiled at him vaguely, as if my eyes were intent on visions hidden from his view, and tried to pass.

"Going for a walk?" he asked. "May I come along?"

"I'd rather not," I answered coolly. "I have some letters to write."

He was much put out.

"Oh, very well."

But by the afternoon he had seemingly got over his pique, because he wanted to take me out in his canoe for water lilies.

But I shook my head.

"I'm sorry, but my doctor says I must rest in the afternoon."

"Have you been ill?"

"Yes." Then I added, in a voice filled with all the weariness in the world, "Quite ill."

At the end of two days, when I had declined to go sailing, when I showed no interest in dancing, when I said I didn't care for flowers, and no, thank you, I was not allowed to eat candy, he cornered me.

"Anne, what on earth is the matter with you?"

"Why—why, nothing."

"Don't tell me that. I know you too well!" Oh, how it does please a man to feel he knows you!

I appeared to consider his words, and then to come to a conclusion.

"I am going to walk to the top of the hill. If you care to come with me, I'll—I'll explain. At least I'll try to. I might as well get it over." And my voice quivered the least little bit in the world.

"I can't realize that it was only a year ago that I was down here before," I mused later, looking out over the still water.

"Didn't we have a good time?" Harry began enthusiastically.



I went forward deliberately and kissed Henry!

"Yes." And I nodded gravely. "I was very happy. I am glad I was happy. I'm glad I had that June." I turned and smiled down at him where he sat at my feet. "I'm even glad—about you."

He looked at me, a bit uncertainly. And I laughed very softly.

"I'm going to tell you about it. It's

very long ago now. So much can happen to a girl in a year. It's part of the explanation you seem to want—why, I don't understand. But it's not an easy explanation to make, so please don't make it any harder by interrupting." I had learned my part very thoroughly, but still I couldn't have Harry bursting in and interfering with my lines.

"I won't," he promised, and started to light a cigarette. Then he seemingly thought better of it and tossed the match away. This encouraged me; it proved that I had got the right atmosphere—mysterious, solemn, like incense and the dim light coming through the stained-glass window at church.

"To begin with," I said, cupping my chin in my hand, and looking across the lake where the drooping willows made a blur of misty green against the sky, "to begin with—I'm engaged."

"Engaged!"

"Yes. Why do you look at me like that? Is it anything unusual?"

"No, but—but you don't *look* engaged, and you so young!"

"Young!" I stopped to laugh—a laugh filled with unutterable things. "Well, that doesn't alter the fact." And I held out my left hand with the diamond ring on it that daddy had given Doris as a coming-out gift. "I'm very happy." I paused and then went on quickly. "Of course I'm happy! The man I'm going to marry is older than I am, much older, and very rich; I think he'll be good to me, and he wants to make me happy." I looked down at him. Isn't it odd how simple the going is when it's all downhill? "And I was happy, or at least contented, until I came down here—and met you. I wonder why you came. It doesn't seem quite fair." I sighed. Then I laughed—light, valiant laughter. "Of course, you didn't know it, and it's so far back that even I can laugh now, but time was when I cared a great deal for you, Harry. And the evanescent beauty, the charm, the heart gayety of first love—ah, we never get it back." I don't claim this as my own; it's in a poem Doris sings.

"But, Anne——"

"And we never care that way again," I finished dreamily.

Harry had been trying to break in for some time, and now he succeeded.

"Well, you treated me like the devil!" he declared.

I touched his arm, a soft but absent caress.

"Yes, I know. I was always sorry, but what does that matter now? It is all over. But I wish—I wish I could have left you with a kinder memory."

"You have no idea, Anne——" Harry was beginning impetuously, but I interrupted him with gentle firmness.

"Then don't tell me. It's better that I don't know. Of course, I don't care for you any more. But I did care once, and it makes me afraid. What if some time I should care that way again?" And my eyes widened as if I were looking at a picture that filled me with fear.

Harry sat up and faced me with determination.

"Then don't do it, Anne. Why, little girl, you're so young, so inexperienced—it's awful to think of your being engaged to a man. What do you know of the world, of the men in it?"

I rose quickly.

"It's no use talking about that. It's too late." Then my voice broke. "Oh, I shouldn't have told you! Why——" And with a panic-stricken gesture I turned and fled down the path.

That night, dressed in my cool gray frock, I met him at the foot of the stairs. I smiled at him in friendly frankness. I knew my changed mood would puzzle him, and men are so much more easily led when they are bewildered.

"I was silly this afternoon," I told him. "I had received a letter that bothered me. Mr.—Mr."—then I decided against a name, for names have a way of turning on you, so to speak—"my fiancé wants to be married immediately; he has received a foreign appointment, so you'll soon see me in white satin with my great aunt's wedding veil." I laughed lightly. "See, I'm quite all

right now. And we'll forget all about this afternoon, won't we?"

And Harry agreed, although not very willingly, but he brightened when I invited him to come and sit at my table.

Every day I received candy or flowers or books from home. Jimmy Lane was in evidence again, and one or two of the men whom I had danced with or laughed with at dinners. Harry thought they were all from my fiancé and glowered at them.

"But, my dear Harry," I dwelled with a cynical smile, "you must not glower. It doesn't seem to strike you that I have done very well for myself, or rather that my people have done very well for me."

"That's it, it's your people," Harry said. "You don't know what you are getting into. You're only a child!"

"Dear man, I'm old as the Cumæan sibyl!" I wasn't sure about this last, but it sounded well and seemed to get by.

"Still, if you don't care for——" Harry persisted.

I snapped my fingers.

"Heaven forbid me from caring for any man! When you care, they can hurt you."

And then, who should arrive at Lake Maxintucke but Doris' fiancé, Henry Lavery. He had been passing through in his car on his way to see some constituents and thought it would be a good idea to drop off and give me a surprise. I wish Eve had broken Adam of the surprise habit back in the Garden of Eden. It would have saved her daughters a great deal!

Harry and I had been up in the summerhouse and they told Henry at the hotel where to find me. And, speaking of surprises, I gave one to Henry.

Henry is tall and has iron-gray hair and looks born for the diplomatic service. You can easily imagine him telling all manner of lies without turning a hair. I looked at Henry and I looked

at Harry. I saw what Harry was thinking, and I didn't hesitate for an instant. I went forward deliberately and kissed Henry!

He nearly died. But he rallied bravely. He didn't know whether it was a childish impulse, or a relative kiss, or that his appearance had filled me with a sudden fancy for him.

We three walked back to the hotel. Two men and a girl are always bad enough, in all conscience, but this trio was deadly. And dinner was worse. Harry made no move to give up his seat at my table; and it was so crowded that the service was awful. Henry ordered a cocktail, but evidently thinking he owed it to the family, he refused to let me have one and patted my hand reprovingly. Then I tried to give myself possessive airs, and these finally entirely upset Henry and he lapsed into silence. Afterward we went to the ballroom and danced. Henry loves to dance, but, after looking over the crop of girls, he said he didn't want to meet any of them, and danced straight through with me. Harry kept coming to the door and looking in with a black frown that was very amusing. That is, I was amused when I wasn't worried about whether or no Henry would get away without anything going wrong.

He did. His motor called at eleven and he departed. He didn't know whether or not to kiss me, in view of the fact that I had kissed him, you know; but, considering the fact that the veranda was crowded, contented himself by pressing my hand.

Henry's visit brought things to a climax between Harry and me. The next evening he took me out in his canoe—I had kept out of his way all day to let Henry seep in—and for two solid hours he talked to me.

Harry had probably forgotten the fact of my existence until I had appeared before his eyes that evening of my arrival at the lake. But, telling

a man that you once cared for him—*once*, understand—has a very peculiar effect on him, especially if you are now safely engaged to another man. It piques his interest and it rouses his pride. He begins to wonder how and why you stopped caring; how he happened to lose his fascination for you. Then the masculine in him demands that he try to get you back, just to prove to himself that he can.

"Anne," Harry told me solemnly, "you can't do it. I am not going to let you."

"You are not going to let *me*!" I laughed derisively.

"No. Oh, I know it's none of my affair! I'm merely the man who lost out!" Did you ever hear such a thing! "But after all, Anne, doesn't that give me *some* right? The right of caring for you? Why, Anne, I love you enough to give you up, if I thought it was for your happiness. But this marriage isn't for your happiness."

"How do you know?" I asked listlessly. "I love beautiful things—the things that money can buy."

"No, you don't, darling, you only think you do."

"Well, thinking so often makes it so to a girl."

He plunged into argument. He held my hand and he kissed my finger tips. But I kept shaking my head, although my heart was fluttering like the fallen leaves along a path in the autumn.

"Oh, Harry—Harry boy, don't make it any harder! Don't you know we can never again find our Eden, once the great gate closes?"

"But ours closed before we had a chance to enjoy it."

Then I reminded him gently.

"But I didn't close it, Harry."

He put his head into my lap.

"You needn't remind me of that. I was a fool—a fool! Nobody knows that better than I do—now!"

"Yes, now," I echoed softly, "now, when it's too late."

"It's never too late!" Harry declared, sitting up so suddenly that the canoe teetered dizzily.

"Admit you loved me once," Harry demanded masterfully.

"Oh, I can do that," I said wearily.

"What good will that do either of us?"

"If you loved me now," Harry went on, "would you give up this man?"

I looked at him in a quick, frightened way.

"Oh, I don't know. How could I?"

"Your life is your own," he cut in violently. "It belongs only to you—and the man who loves you."

"But, Harry, Henry loves me, too." If Doris could have heard this, she would have had a fit. She's funny about some things.

"No one has a right to your youth, your sweetness, your love—unless you give it freely. And you are not giving it to this man your people are forcing you to marry. You can't give it. It belongs to me!" he finished triumphantly.

"Please take me home," I begged. "Oh, Harry, if you care, how can you make it so hard for me?"

The east was banked with great clouds when Harry helped me out of the canoe. They were dragging the chairs back from the railing on the hotel veranda, and windows were banging down.

Once in the arbor, Harry caught me in his arms. The beautiful scene in the canoe hadn't affected me particularly, but now all at once I felt that Harry cared, really cared, and that the blot on my 'scutcheon was removed. A man can fake pretty speeches, the ones who make them the most convincingly do—but a man doesn't fake a break in his voice, nor shaking hands.

"Oh, I love you so much, dear. Your pretty, wistful smile; the look in your eyes—kiss me, Anne darling!"

But I wouldn't. I suddenly wished that I was miles from the arbor. His voice, his arm about me, his lips—oh, I was getting more frightened every minute!

"Anne," and I could feel Harry staring down at me in the darkness, "you're going to marry me to-night!"

"No—no!"

"Yes. I love you—and you love me!"

"I don't love you—I don't!" And I tried to put everything final in the world into my voice.

But he laughed with gentle incredulity.

"Oh, yes, you do. If you don't I'll teach you how. I did once. You're coming with me to-night."

"I am not!" And all the pretty wistfulness departed from my voice, and I stamped my foot.

Then his voice changed, too.

"Yes, you are. You're coming with me to-night—you may marry me or you may not—that's up to you. But—make no mistake about this—you're *coming*!"

And as we stood there, with the leaves rustling above our heads and turning white as they turned over in the wind; with the thunder rumbling like big guns, and the black clouds racing

across the sky, and the lake roughening up into white crests, like the silver pinions of sea gulls, all my deep-laid plans for getting even with Harry, all my intrigue, seemed to melt away in my heart. It all seemed very sweet—everything. The shelter of his arms; the feeling of his silk shirt under my cheek; the masterful note in his voice; his breath on my forehead, and finally, even the touch of his lips. I was swept away to a desert island where only two people counted—Harry and I.

Then, like a streak of lightning across the sky, a thought flashed through my mind. "Anne—Anne Thorne—run, run while there is yet time!"

So, throwing my head back, I twisted myself free and ran, saying "Yes—yes," over my shoulder, when he told me that he would be waiting at the pier in ten minutes.

I don't know how long he waited there for me. I was sitting on Delia's lap, my arms locked tightly about her neck, and I never budged all night. And when the early morning milk train went through the junction, we were on it.

Do you understand now what I mean when I say, revenge can be too sweet?



LOVE DOES NOT LAUGH

LOVE laughs at locksmiths!" Nay, Love does not laugh!

Love is no jester with a cap and bells;
Love is a young god, and he bids us quaff

A godlike cup, brewed of fresh asphodels,
Until we jeer at locksmiths and their art,
The master key shut safe within our heart.

"Love laughs at locksmiths!" Nay, this cannot be!

As well a star at some poor glowworm's flame.
Love teaches Youth the open sesame

And Youth works miracles in love's own name,
Spurning bonds, fetters, barriers, and gates,
Idol of Fortune, favored of the Fates.

L. M. THORNTON.



The Ghosts

By Hildegard Lavender

Author of "At the Office Door," "Reassuring Doris," etc.

In which two ghosts from the past slip out to a haunted spot.

FROM the moment I read it in Saturday's *Times*, I knew that I should go there that day. But I swear, even to my undeceivable self, that I did not believe that *he* would go. Ghosts, ghosts!

"Marcotti's, well known to two generations of New Yorkers, is to pass out of existence on Tuesday," said the *Times*. "The last meal, except an invitation dinner to old patrons, tendered by the management on Tuesday night, will be luncheon that day. On Wednesday, the work of wrecking will begin, and the famous old landmark will be no more. The South Jersey and Western Railroad, which has bought the property, will erect an office building on the site, which the new subway will connect with its terminal station."

Then the report went on to talk of the days when downtown was fashionable, and dances and routs were given at Marcotti's, when the banquet to Prince So-and-So was held there, when the Old Guards' ball filled its state-rooms and its stairways. And the report went on to tell how, even when fashion had moved uptown and had forgotten Marcotti's, the famous old chef's heirs had found it sufficiently profitable to keep their dining rooms and grills and bars open for the great

army of downtown professional people who swarmed there at noon for food that many declared to be still the best the city afforded, and who dined there scattering at night.

I looked around my dining room after I had read the paragraphs. Blue and gray—the blue of Canton china, the gray of weathered oak. Blue roses in the chintz side curtains at the sunny windows, gray brick on the hearth and the mantel—oh, a perfect suburban dining room, such as I had dreamed of, longed for, looked toward, all the drab years of my service with Lloyd & Deering.

Until *he* came back from his travels and his adventures—Will Deering!

The suburban dining room lost its lure about that time. I didn't want to work for it any longer. I didn't want to fill the weathered oak chest, which Ned and I had already acquired, with embroidered linens. The suburbs looked uninteresting. Ned, plodding, patient, unsuccessful—Ned looked uninteresting. I tried to forget him. I never told Will of his existence.

There was a good deal of night work to be done after Will Deering came back. *His* work. I used to stay and help him. I don't know how he managed it—I had been old Lloyd's secre-

tary until he came. But he did manage it. We used to have dinner at Marcotti's. It was old-fashioned even then, seven—no, eight years ago. Funny old oil paintings in deep, tarnished gilt frames; huge chandeliers of bronze and glass, hanging from the middle of dingily rose-garlanded ceilings; deep, thick carpets. Only a few people went there to dinner. We felt almost alone in the little dining room we chose for our own. Will said that the cooking was as good as anywhere in Europe and that Marcotti's cellar was unapproachable.

As for me, I didn't know what I was eating or what I was drinking. And by and by the dining room had faded clear out of my thoughts, and Ned—good, patient, plodding, unsuccessful Ned!—was in them only as an obstacle.

An obstacle to what?

To the freedom I craved, the freedom to be a fool, a tragic fool! Oh, how I craved it!

And at last, one night sitting over the table at Marcotti's, looking at Will, looking at clear, amber bubbles rising in a lovely glass, listening to his words, listening to the beating of my own heart—I achieved that freedom. Ned and the home for which we had worked were blotted out. Freedom—

The next day there was such a revolution in my heart! I could have taken death from Ned's hand willingly, joyfully! I felt that I had forfeited forever the little home for which we had worked, and it was as beautiful to my thoughts as heaven.

I resigned that day from Lloyd & Deering's. I would not see Will again. I never saw him again until—

Perhaps I lack conscience. Perhaps I merely have common sense. I shall never know. For, after all, I didn't beg Ned to kill me for the wrong I had done his love. I swore in my heart to make up to him for it. I swore to make my life one long service for him.

I have done it for eight years. Success and happiness have been his. I have poured energy and ambition into him from some new, exhaustless store of them in me. I have served him with brain and hand and heart. I have been passionately happy in my passionate, unspoken repentance and atonement.

Yet, when I saw that Marcotti's was to go, I could not keep away. Ned had been West on a business trip for three weeks. I went to town early that Tuesday morning—was it only the day before yesterday? I went early to the restaurant. I engaged our old table. I gave the head waiter—the same head waiter—who beamed in recognition upon me, more to hold that table for me than I could have paid for a month's luncheons in the old days. I could afford it—Ned's wife could afford it.

At one o'clock I went. I sat down in the old corner under a vast, foolish oil painting of two lovers taking leave of each other under a wide-branching oak. I ordered my luncheon, and I looked around at the men and the women who crowded the close-packed tables and stood in the doorways, awaiting their chance. Were they all ghosts, like me, come to revisit the scene of some great, vanished adventure of their youth? What longing dragged them hither?

And then at the door, I saw *him* waiting. His eyes met mine. For a second he stared, stared hard. Ned's wife, smart, assured, a little hard, perhaps, may not have seemed, for that brief second, the shabby girl of eight years ago with her sudden flame of desire. But he knew me. He moved slowly toward me, like a person struggling in a dream—like a ghost.

My heart leaped to bursting in triumph. For him, too, for him, as for me, the place was haunted ground. He, too, had been coerced to revisit this spot!

He dropped into the chair opposite

me without a word. And then: "You—you!" he cried.

That perfect home of mine, with its terraces and its little pergola; with its sunny nursery and its brick-walled garden; Ned, dear, boyish, assured, successful Ned; the children; the neighbors; all my life for which I had toiled with brain and heart and hand, allowing myself no fatigue, no recollection, not even any remorse—it all dissolved when he spoke again and said:

"I've never been here since, Helen. But I had to come to-day. To-day—ah, my dear!"

Yesterday I could have knelt before Ned and could have taken death from his hands willingly, joyfully. I should

have begged it from him, confessing everything! But he was not here. And to-day, am I glad or sorry?

To-day how beautiful to me is my home, my life for which I have worked, stilling so many voices! Am I conscienceless, or have I merely common sense?

We will never meet again, Will and I. He does not even know my name.

Can I not again make reparation? Pour fresh wealth of energy and ambition and inspiration into my husband's life and my children's?

What punishment shall there be for ghosts who slip out of the heaven of their new lives to regain, in some haunted spot, the great adventure of their past?



WOODS AND WOMAN

TO-DAY the leaves are off the trees;
A faint mauve tint is in the air,
Like to none other anywhere
Save in thin woods where Autumn is.

Spring reveled in a maze of green,
Veiling, no less, the forest through
With baby leaves against the blue,
Where dryads might creep forth and glean.

But now between the stems you see,
As 'twere, the spirit of the place
And brave, rich season—spread with grace
A sky of lapis lazuli.

The leaves are off your heart to-day,
Sweet woman! All that glimmering veil
That daunted me—a slender pale,
And yet I might not force my way.

Round your young spirit, twig and bole,
Fluttered your girlish moods a while—
Now are you woman grown, to smile
True blue, and let me see your soul!

JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.



Photograph copyright by Strauss-Deyton

Ethel Barrymore, the Actress.



Photograph by Arnold G.enthe.

Zoë Akins, the Author.

New York Stage Successes

Déclassée

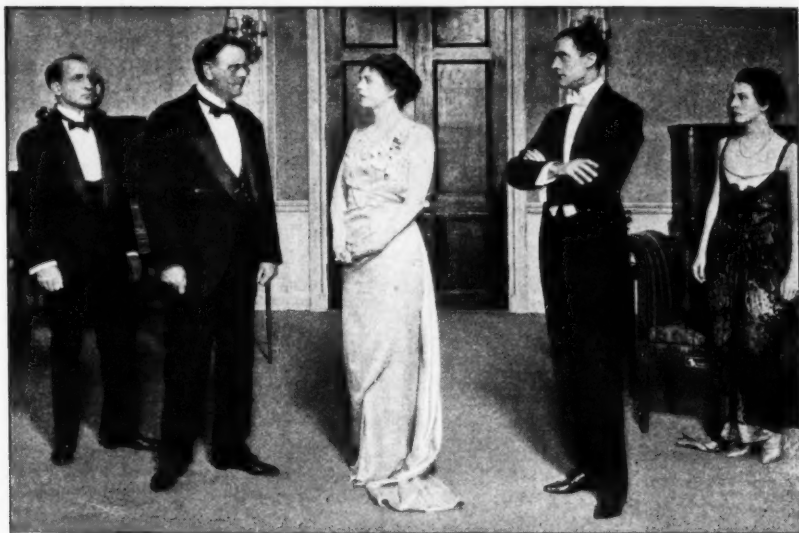
By Zoë Akins

LADY HELEN HADEN, in "Déclassée," has come near being the sensation of the New York theatrical season. And why? Because the unusual character created by Miss Akins has been invested with all the magic charm and warmth, the gay whimsicality, the eloquent tenderness, and the heart-touching tragedy of which Ethel Barrymore is mistress.

The curtain rises upon a drawing-room in the London house of the bibulous, ill-bred Sir Bruce Haden. There has been card playing, and Edward

Thayer, a young American guest, in whom Lady Helen is fondly, tenderly interested, has been accused by her husband of cheating. Lady Helen has risen to Thayer's defense, and a stormy scene has ensued. The evening's entertainment has been threatened with disaster. Among the other guests are Charlotte Ashley, a popular actress; Sir Emmett Wildering, a successful diplomat; his wife, Lady Wildering; and Harry Charteris, a serious, rather delicate-looking musician—all close friends of Lady Helen's. There is

By Courtesy of the Charles Frohman Company, Inc.



Harry Charteris
(Charles Francis)

Sir Bruce Haden
(Harry Plimmer)

Lady Helen Haden
(Ethel Barrymore)

Edward Thayer
(Vernon Steele)

Lady Wildering
(Clare Eames)

LADY HELEN: Wait a minute, Bruce! You were very headstrong a moment ago in calling this friend of mine a cheat and a liar, and ordering him from the house.

also Mrs. Leslie, an extravagantly dressed, pleasure-seeking, American woman, who is very clever at bridge.

CHARLOTTE (*to* LADY WILDERING): Go up and talk to Helen. She admits that under the circumstances Sir Bruce did fairly well. Only she's sorry, of course, that she was not as usual the sole object of his wrath. I never played a scene on the stage better than I've played the rôle of peacemaker to-night. My defense of Sir Bruce was a masterpiece—especially so, because I didn't believe a word of what I preached. What a man! And here we are—all of us—trying to keep them together when we ought to beg her, if she has any pride or any courage left, to leave him, at once, forever!

LADY WILDERING: But what would she do? What could she do?

CHARLOTTE: Anything would be better than *this*—surely.

HARRY: Don't forget that you're talking as a woman who can make a mighty good living on the stage. But there's nothing, nothing at all, that Helen could do. And there's nobody—who has the right—to give her anything. And she doesn't know—and will never learn—the difference between a pound and a shilling.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, she knows that a pound is something you give the head waiter and a shilling something you give the taxi driver. Helen thinks that is what real money is for—to tip people with.

MRS. LESLIE: They say she is the most extravagant woman in London.

CHARLOTTE: In the world, probably.

MRS. LESLIE: But if he treats her so badly? Surely one can get a divorce from a *brute*.

CHARLOTTE: Not in England. Not even when your husband is a drunken brute of a *butcher*—

MRS. LESLIE: Sir Bruce wasn't really a *butcher*!

HARRY: The most successful butcher in the Empire.

MRS. LESLIE: That is why he has a title?

HARRY: You'll find England as quick as America to acknowledge success in business, Mrs. Leslie, even if we're not so quick to acknowledge failure in matrimony.

MRS. LESLIE: It seems *immoral* to me that a woman has to live with a man who acts as Sir Bruce does.

LADY WILDERING: The law doesn't make her live with him. She can leave him any time she likes.

MRS. LESLIE: But if she can't divorce him, she has no chance of marrying any one else. Of course I'm not defending women who keep on getting divorces and marrying again. My husbands—both of them—died.

HARRY: They were more considerate than Sir Bruce has ever been willing to be.

MRS. LESLIE: But why did she marry him in the first place?

HARRY: I suppose it was one of her practical whims. And then, a hint of the barbaric seems to appeal to most women. I think I'll go up and speak to Helen, unless Lady Wildering will go.

LADY WILDERING: No, you go. I've said everything I could think of. (HARRY exits.)

MRS. LESLIE (hesitantly): Did it ever occur to you that Mr. Charteris might be in love with Lady Helen?

LADY WILDERING: I suppose it has occurred to everybody who has ever known them both that Harry Charteris has been in love with Helen all his life.

CHARLOTTE: Yes—hopelessly, wonderfully, unselfishly, beautifully in love—all his life.

MRS. LESLIE: She's never mentioned it.

CHARLOTTE: She wouldn't. (Changing the subject) Now, about Mr. Thayer?

MRS. LESLIE (rising): I'll go to the library and try again to get him in good humor. It may take some time. He's very—difficult. (Exits.)

CHARLOTTE: I detest that woman.

LADY WILDERING: I should not mind her so much if I were not an American, too. And she's a type that particularly annoys me. However, why I'm wasting words about Mrs. Leslie I don't know—particularly when I have Helen so much on my mind to-night. Things seem to go from bad to worse for Helen. They always have.

CHARLOTTE: One feels them piling up.

(SIR EMMETT and SIR BRUCE, who has calmed down considerably, come in. MRS. LESLIE returns with THAYER, and finally LADY HELEN herself enters, smiling and full of easy, gracious nonsense.)

LADY HELEN: I had my fortune told to-day. Zellito. She's the new Spanish dancer at the Gaiety. She's a gypsy. Dancing is her real job. Fortune-telling is just a sort of gift. She doesn't do it unless she feels a special interest in you. It's enormously flattering to have her feel a special interest in one. It makes one feel so important psychically—as if one had a destiny or something of the sort. Zellito thinks I have one, but she wouldn't tell me what it was. Some sort of spectacular doom, I suppose. (Looks in the palms of her hands, smiling.) I wonder? I never believe doctors or lawyers—but I always believe fortune-tellers.



LADY HELEN: But you, Ned—I want something very fine for you. I want to be so proud of you that there will be tears in my eyes when I think of you.

SIR BRUCE: Yes, you would, being one of the mad Varvicks.

LADY HELEN (*with a laugh*): The mad Varvicks will soon trouble the world no longer. (*Turning to MRS. LESLIE and THAYER*) I suppose you don't know about the mad Varvicks? There was once quite a lot of us, and now I'm the only one that's left. We were very gay about five hundred years ago, but even then we were a little mad, too, I suppose. And we kept on being gay and mad through some of the soberest days that England has ever known. Sometimes we lost our heads; sometimes we went to house parties in the Tower; sometimes we hunted with the King, and knew all the secrets of the Queen. But there never was a battle fought for England, by sea or land, in which some Varvick did not offer his gay, mad life. Perhaps that's how we got the habit of dying. We've always died. I think we've rather liked dying—just as we've always liked our ghosts and our debts and our hereditary gout and our scandals and our troubadours and our fortune-telling gypsies and even our white sheep. We do admit to an occasional white sheep in the family—one every century or so—(*Breaking off abruptly*) And now—before we attempt to play again—(*she grows stern*)—I think my husband wishes to apologize to Mr. Thayer, before all of you, for what he said to Mr. Thayer, in this room a little while ago.

SIR BRUCE (*furiously*): My God! I—

LADY HELEN: You accused one of my friends, a young man who is a stranger in this country, and who came to this house on my invitation, of trying to cheat you at cards. You cannot prove your statement; but, on the other hand, he cannot disprove it. It is one of those charges that is infamously unfair because there is no way to get at the truth. But in this case—even if I had never seen Mr. Thayer before—even if I did not know him incapable of such dishonesty—I would insist upon giving him the benefit of the very great doubt that your suspicions—

SIR BRUCE: I tell you my *suspicious*—

LADY HELEN: Wait a minute, Bruce! You were very headstrong a moment ago in calling this friend of mine a cheat and a liar, and ordering him from the house. And I know you well enough to know that the story would have got about, and he would have been done for—even if every one else in this room had kept decently silent. Oh, I know!

SIR BRUCE: Well, I let him stay, didn't I?

There he is. I'm willing to say no more—if you want to let the matter drop now. I know men who wouldn't let it drop. But I'm willing.

LADY HELEN: But I'm not. Not until you've said to Mr. Thayer that you apologize. (*SIR BRUCE protests, offering half-drunken insinuations that are insulting to LADY HELEN. She turns about suddenly and goes blindly toward the doorway.*)

SIR BRUCE (*alarmed*): Wait! Helen!

LADY HELEN: This—this is impossible.

THAYER: I beg of you, please—don't make me feel so responsible! I wouldn't for the world have caused you this trouble.

LADY HELEN: I know that. And you must know the very great regret I feel for having exposed you to insults and accusations against which you are as defenseless as I. I will let you know, later, where I am.

THAYER: You are going, really—just because of this unfortunate affair to-night?

LADY HELEN: I should have gone some time. It isn't your fault, you know. For any stranger invited to my house I should have asked the simple justice I have asked for you. A fantastic love of justice happens to be one of the things that the mad Varvicks have died for.

SIR BRUCE (*heavily*): I—I will apologize. Come back, Helen. I'm not a very pleasant sort, I suppose, and—oh, well, I apologize, and I hope that every one realizes that I spoke hastily and unjustly, and that I'm very sorry.

LADY HELEN (*quickly, warmly*): That's splendid of you, Bruce! That's just what I wanted you to say. (*Turning to her friends, after SIR BRUCE and SIR EMMETT have withdrawn*) Well? Bruce was in great form to-night, wasn't he?

CHARLOTTE: So were you, Helen.

LADY HELEN: Yes, I know I was. I was very serious. When I begin invoking the mad Varvicks for Bruce's benefit, you can always know that I'm a bit desperate. It's the one thing that he still likes about me—being a mad Varvick, I mean. But he thinks I'm the maddest of the lot. We'd had some discussions earlier in the day—about a few bills that seemed particularly mad to him. Bruce believes in being extravagant economically. He's made a fine art of it. His apology was very pretty, I thought—prettier than any one could have hoped for, under the circumstances.

LADY WILDERING: Yes, he said just the right thing.

LADY HELEN: It's not supremely jolly to be married to Bruce, but I don't know what

I'd do if he threw me over, or I had to throw him over. I'd have no luck with hat shops and things of that sort. It would be easier to sell a pearl every day or two—until they were all gone—

CHARLOTTE: Yes? And then?

LADY HELEN (*with a shudder and a smile*): Then— I suppose I'd become *déclassée*, in time—and the Queen wouldn't care whether I had a cold or not—

Later, Lady Helen seizes an opportunity to speak to Thayer.

LADY HELEN: I'm so sorry about to-night.

THAYER: I'm sorry, too, but I couldn't help it.

LADY HELEN: I know you couldn't. There's nothing—nothing at all too dreadful for my husband to say when he's—when he's jealous or in a bad mood.

THAYER (*unhappily*): I suppose—at least according to the tales one hears—he's had occasion to be jealous a great many times.

LADY HELEN: He's thought so. But I think he's learned a lesson to-night.

THAYER: You were so wonderful. If I didn't know better, I could almost have thought that you really cared for me. (*Doubtfully*) Look here—do you care for me?

LADY HELEN: If you don't know—if you really don't know, why bother about it?

THAYER: One shouldn't bother about it. You are right. After all, I'm just an incident in your life—just some one who happened to interest you for a month or so, one spring out of all the other springs. Last year it was some one else; and next



Gay, whimsical, tender, and sad, Ethel Barrymore as *Lady Helen* has never had a rôle that suited her better.

year it will be another, and after that another—

LADY HELEN (*genuinely hurt*): So you don't mean to let yourself care one little bit more about me than you think I care about you, do you, Ned? (*He does not answer; she continues lightly.*) You think you are just one of my caprices, don't you? I suppose, after all, there was some one whom you thought you cared for last spring—and the spring before? And surely there



RUDOLPH SOLOMON (Claude King): We might go very far together, Lady Helen—you and I.

will be some one this time next year—And perhaps *that* some one will be the right one, and she'll have all the other spring-times as well. I hope so. And I hope that she will have a very firm hand—for she will need it with you, my dear; and a very tender heart, for she will need that, too; and a very wise head—you're not very wise yourself, you know. And I hope that she will be young and lovely and that you will be always happy together, and very, very sad apart—as long as both of you live.

THAYER: That's a strange way to talk.

LADY HELEN: Poor Ned! Hasn't any one ever wanted you to be happy before?

THAYER: Not any one who pretended to be in love with me.

LADY HELEN: Love is something that not many of us know much about. I don't pretend to know myself. And I've never *pretended* to love you, Ned. Love! I'm afraid of the very word.

THAYER: But only a week ago—oh, I don't understand you! You wrote me such wonderful letters from the country. Is it stupid to think you cared for me when you wrote them?

LADY HELEN: No, I don't think the stupidest person would doubt that I cared for you when I wrote them. (*Wearily*) But let's not

talk about what we feel or won't feel, to-night.

THAYER (*not heeding her*): And then, this last week, since you've come back, you've scarcely let me see you at all. Of course, everybody says that you get tired of everybody and everything. I suppose you're already tired of me. I was sure of it—until to-night; then I thought—perhaps—I wish I could believe that, at least, you'd like for things to be different, and we could begin all over again together.

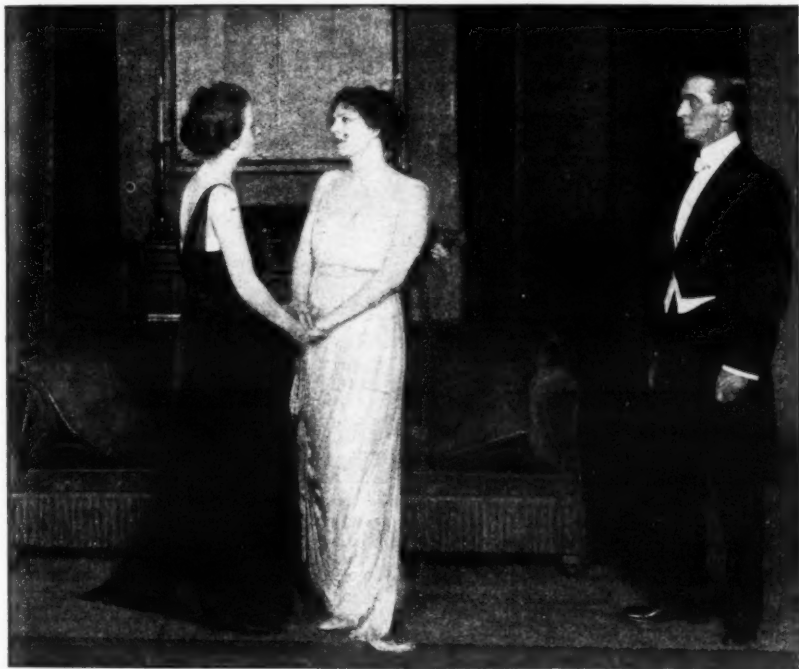
LADY HELEN: I don't know what I wish for myself, Ned. But my life is like water that has gone over the dam and turned no mill wheels. There I am—not happy, but not unhappy, as my days run on to the sea, idly yet too swiftly, for I love living. But you—I want something very fine for you. I want to be so proud of you that there will be tears in my eyes when I think of you. And so I want you to go away, my dear. London is not the place for you. You've told me something of your life in that small American city—how you hated it—how you drifted to New York after your father's death—of your idleness there—of your procrastination about work—of this aimless trip to London—of your half-formed dream of going to South Africa in search of a for-

tune. I've thought a great deal about all you've told me. Why don't you go to South Africa at once?

THAYER: I haven't much philosophy, I suppose. I believe in living and letting live. If I want to stay in London—as long as I can afford it—I don't see why you should object. I'm finding London a pretty jolly place. Besides I've had some good business offers lately—

thing. My future, if I've got one, is going to be in the pleasantest places I can find.

LADY HELEN (*rising, with a laugh*): I've been fantastic again. After all, as you say, why shouldn't you stay in London? (*And presently they go out to join the others at bridge, where LADY HELEN'S dream for THAYER is soon abruptly shattered. She herself catches him, as well as Mrs. LESLIE, cheating.*)



Lady Helen, a guest at the home of Rudolph Solomon, is touched by Lady Wildering's interest in her.

LADY HELEN: From Mr. Rudolph Solomon?

THAYER: He was one, yes. He's a big man in America.

LADY HELEN: But rather lonely in London.

THAYER: You've taken me up, as they say, and Rudolph Solomon thinks you might do the same thing for him if he paid me a salary. But even that wouldn't be as bad as—I never told you, did I, that I went to Alaska once? I stood it for two years, but I haven't got the stamina for that sort of

LADY HELEN (*furious with rage*): You fools! Fools! Did you think I was too blind and too stupid to detect your miserable signals? Or that I had such supreme faith in you that I wouldn't believe the evidence of my own eyes? Or that I would be complacent because I had defended you an hour ago, and would find it humiliating to go to my husband and tell him that he was right and I was wrong? Or has dishonesty become such a habit with you that you find it impossible not to cheat. Don't try to speak to me, Mrs. Leslie. Just go.



LADY HELEN: Rudolph, it was such a brief love—it died so soon—that it was like a child of Never-never Land. Sometimes its ghost has walked in my heart, but perhaps that has been because my heart was such an empty house.

MRS. LESLIE (*beginning to sob*): Oh, no, no! I'll go. I'll— You couldn't understand—

LADY HELEN: You're quite right. I couldn't possibly understand. Let her out, will you, Harry?

MRS. LESLIE (*pausing in the doorway and throwing a look of bitter hatred at LADY HELEN*): I suppose you've never done anything to be ashamed of? Well, if you ever do, I hope you'll find people just as merciful as I've found you.

LADY HELEN: I hope I will find them just as—merciful, Mrs. Leslie. I shall never mention your name to anybody, again. (MRS. LESLIE *exits*.)

THAYER (*humiliated, sulky*): There's nothing I can say—now—except that I'm sorry.

LADY HELEN: You must say that to my husband.

THAYER: But why? You'll only put yourself in a hole. You'll only be admitting you were wrong. And I won't ever come here again. I'll keep out of your way—but you can't—you can't tell him! He'll tell the story all over London. And it won't stop there. They'll know it in New York. It will ruin me, for good and all. I am sorry. I'll never do it again.

LADY HELEN: Is that all? Have you never heard of *fair play*? Well, turn about is *fair play*. It's my husband's turn now.

THAYER (*threatening*): You don't dare. You said to-night that if he kicked me out of this house, you'd go out of it, too, forever. Very well. I say that if he kicks me out, you *will* go out of it, too, forever.

You don't get what I'm driving at, do you? I mean that I've got letters of yours—I've got them right here. If you tell on me, I'll tell on you. If you're so damned keen on playing fair with your brute of a husband—I'll play fair with him, too! (HARRY CHARTERIS *re-enters*. LADY HELEN *turns to him*.)

LADY HELEN: Open that door, will you, Harry—and ask Sir Bruce and the others to come immediately? (HARRY *ushers them in*.) I've something to tell you—all of you. About Mr. Thayer. You were right, Bruce. And I was quite, quite wrong. He— (The curtain falls.)

Sir Bruce puts the worst possible interpretation upon the romantic, tender letters his wife has written to Thayer. Lady Helen is cast off, and forced to live as best she may. Two

years later this daughter of an earl has come a long way from the arms of the queen who was her godmother. She is in New York, living in attempted gayety, paying her bills with her fast-disappearing jewels, and associating with a colorful, rather questionable crowd of bohemians. She has indeed become *déclassée*.

The curtain rises upon the lounge of a fashionable hotel at tea time. At a table in the foreground are seated Sir Emmett Wildering, the new British Ambassador, Lady Wildering, Charlotte Ashley, who is starring in a Broadway play, and Harry Charteris.

LADY WILDERING: She's never written to any of us since she came to America. She doesn't want to see us.

HARRY: If she doesn't, it will be very simple not to intrude upon her, since we don't know where she lives. But Helen's an Englishwoman, and our own kind, and although she's done every damnable thing that a woman can do to cut herself adrift from us, there's nothing, nothing in the world that I wouldn't do for her, if it could do any good.

SIR EMMETT: But nothing can do any good. It's just because she is an Englishwoman and our own kind that we must be stern with ourselves about her. She had a great name, great traditions, great gifts, great charm; and in God's name what has she done with them? For her personal misfortunes one is sorry, sorry beyond all words; but, as an Englishman, I cannot

forgive an Englishwoman for making, in a strange country, a sneer of her class, a joke of her rank, and a miserable adventure of her life. (LADY HELEN enters. She is expecting guests for tea, and is looking especially radiant. With amazement she recognizes her former English friends. As she approaches them, her voice and smile are both gay and tender.)

LADY HELEN: Harry! And—it's too wonderful—all of you! Charlotte—Edith! Bless you! One never knows how much one loves England— (Breaking off abruptly) This is like home, isn't it? How does it



LADY HELEN: Harry, I've a very great affection for you. But—if I were your mother, I wouldn't let you marry me.

happen that we are all really here? Of course—(to CHARLOTTE)—you're easily explained. I'm so glad your play is a success. I've been to see you five times. How are the children? They're at home, I suppose? And so grown up that I wouldn't know them any more—the darlings!

CHARLOTTE: Yes, I must show you their pictures. Will you come and dine with me soon?

LADY HELEN: Yes, rather! (Turning to LADY WILDERING) I read that they were sending Emmett over. It was about time. Isn't it a pity that England hasn't enough Emmett Wilderings to go around? She can send him only one place at a time. (To SIR EMMETT) I've read your books as they've come out, and all your speeches. But I think you're wrong about our policy in the East. We ought to— (Stops suddenly with a laugh.) No, I haven't the courage to argue with you any more about anything. I haven't even seen England for two years. I don't know what we ought to do; only certain things have looked very mysterious from a distance. Then there's the labor question; and there is, always was, and always will be, Ireland. I worry a lot about Ireland.

SIR EMMETT: Shall we have a long talk and thresh it all out?

LADY HELEN: Yes, rather! But now I must be going. It's been enough for one time—seeing you even for a few minutes. I can't tell you how I—how I loved it. (To LADY WILDERING) You haven't told me about the dogs yet, but you must. I still have Plato. You gave him to me when he was a puppy, do you remember? He will want to know all about his relatives at home, of course. Plato and I have held long conversations about you, quite often. (Turning to HARRY) I haven't tried to tell you, and I didn't try to write, how sorry I was to hear of your uncle's death. It was a great pity. He wasn't old or tired or unhappy.

HARRY: Yes, it was a great pity. He loved life to the very end.

LADY HELEN: I know. Englishmen are like that. They love life more and value it less than any other people in the world.

Rudolph Solomon, the distinguished financier and art collector, who is among Lady Helen's guests for tea, tarries after the others have gone.

SOLOMON: You're very childlike, Lady Helen.

LADY HELEN: Is that why you are looking at me so sternly? Are you thinking that I've got my fruck very soiled?

SOLOMON: I'm thinking that you've run very hard, and played very recklessly.

LADY HELEN: So I have. It's sometimes very difficult to realize that this is a serious world—and that life is something more than a hilltop in the sun, with an adventure lurking in every flower. There are so many things to make one smile; and the older one grows, and the more one is alone, the oftener one smiles to oneself. I don't say that they are always happy smiles—but just the fact of being alive is rather gay.

"For to admire and for to see,

For to behold the world so wide—"

Only an Englishman could have written that. Did you ever meet Kipling, by the way? He used to dine with us— (She breaks off sharply.)

SOLOMON: Go on.

LADY HELEN: There's nothing more—I was just rambling. Have I bored you? (He looks at her without answering.) Now, what are you thinking of, my friend?

SOLOMON: I was thinking of a shooting star, Lady Helen—a star that I saw once fall from the sky into that dark garden of water that lies between New York and the outer ocean. I was a newsboy, and I had sold all my papers. I was lying on the grass in Battery Park because it was better than going to the place I called home. I was half asleep when I saw the lightning of the shooting star. (He pauses. There is an instant's silence.) When the grass of Battery Park was my bed, an earl, to me, was as legendary as the Santa Claus that drove his reindeers down the chimneys of fortunate children at Christmas time. An earl's daughter as remote as the farthest star in the darkness of the night. Yet here we are, Lady Helen, you and I.

LADY HELEN: Yes, here we are—you and I. It's power that you really wanted—and have got, isn't it?

SOLOMON: Power—and the flavor of life at its rarest, and to know that there is one thing more I must have. You. I want you. (Quietly) We might go very far together—you and I.

LADY HELEN: And I'm not likely to go very far alone, I suppose?

SOLOMON: I don't know. I can't say. You're quite wonderful now, Lady Helen, but there's "To-morrow and To-morrow and To-morrow—"

LADY HELEN: I know. And there's old age around the curve—and just one more pearl. (She looks at the ring on her finger and laughs a little, uneasily.)

SOLOMON: And no one knows how much

farther each of us has to go, Lady Helen.

LADY HELEN: But it's a part of the adventure to keep one's courage and not to care too greatly how the wheel of fortune turns, for we must all go from the game empty-handed at last. And if we've played fairly I don't believe that we will mind, really, when the moment comes to blow out our candles and sleep.

SOLOMON: You mean—

LADY HELEN: I mean, my friend, that I am going to refuse your offer and all that it might lead to. And I really like you very much. And it's a temptation, too, to think of the sheer decency of having enough money again for one's whims—which seem so much more important, somehow, than one's needs. But it isn't quite cricket, according to my topsy-turvy ethics, to take away a woman's lover—though I suppose I wouldn't hesitate if you were her husband. Alice Vance loves you; and there's something about love—true love—that's very touching to me—something at which even I cannot smile.

SOLOMON: You must have been very much in love once.

LADY HELEN (*quietly*): I was.

SOLOMON: And you must have been very much hurt.

LADY HELEN: I was.

SOLOMON: And then—what happened?

LADY HELEN: I ran very hard, and played very recklessly, and fell down and soiled my frock and cut my hands, and cried a little and laughed a little. That's all.

SOLOMON: Didn't he care for you?

LADY HELEN: Not the least bit in the world.

SOLOMON: And that was why—

LADY HELEN: Oh, no; that wasn't why I ran hard—and played recklessly. I knew from the very beginning that he didn't care for me—at least that it was nothing to what I felt for him. I was married, you see. I had made up my mind never to see him any more—just to be an influence, if I could, for good in his life.

SOLOMON: Don't tell me any more, if you



LADY HELEN: Don't bother to explain, my friend. It might be awkward; and it isn't necessary.

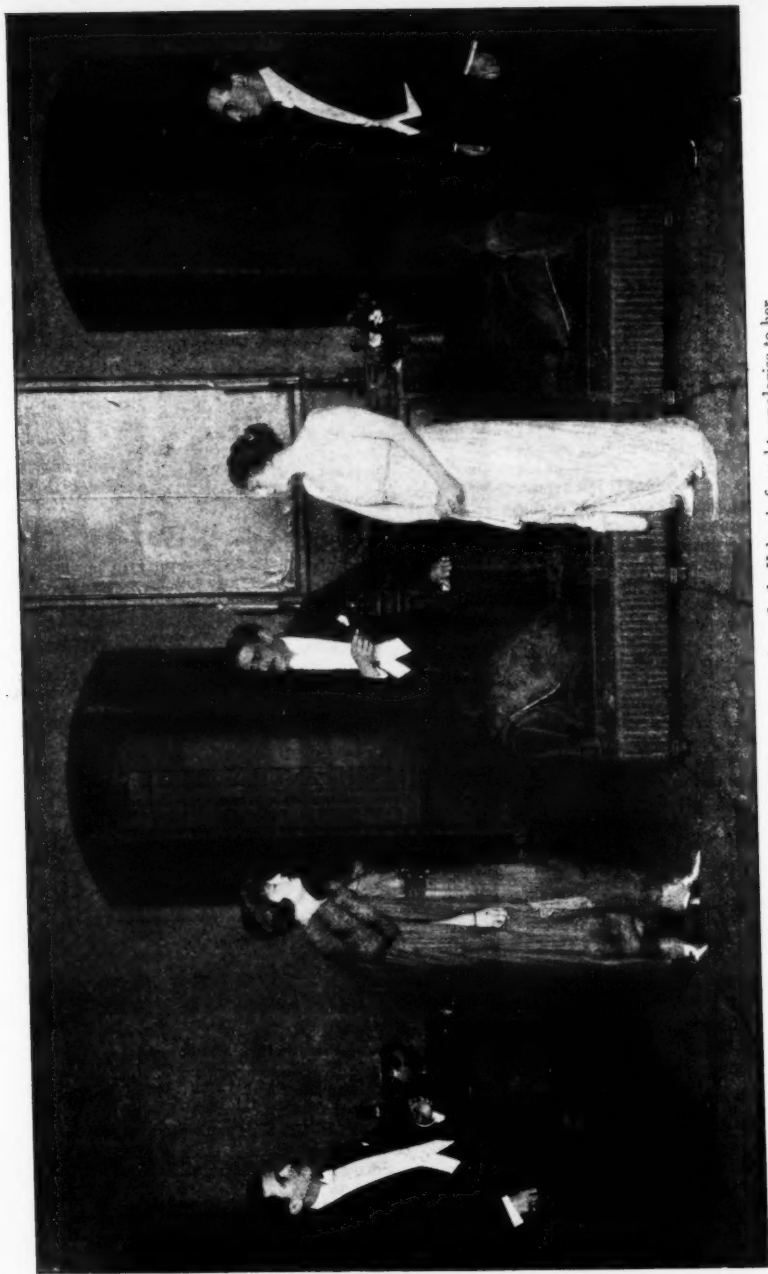
don't want to, but I— What happened? (*He lays his hand on hers a moment.*)

LADY HELEN: He cheated at cards. I couldn't bear that.

SOLOMON: I understand. That ended it, of course.

LADY HELEN: It should have. But it didn't. That's all.

SOLOMON: How long ago did this happen?



Mrs. Leslie (Katherine Harris), after insulting *Lady Helen*, is forced to apologize to her.

LADY HELEN: So long ago that it's not real now. I've often wondered why it was that I—of all women—should have cared for him—of all men. Long ago I stopped trying to explain to myself. Now—it never really happened. Only I could never kill something in another woman's heart that might be as beautiful as the thing that life killed in mine. Let's talk of something else.

A week later, the Wilderings, Charlotte Ashley, Harry Charteris, Alice Vance, Lady Helen, and others are dining with Rudolph Solomon in his magnificent new home.

LADY HELEN: I'm racing Charlotte about the house on a very impressionistic tour of inspection. (To ALICE) I'm so glad you've come. You're going to sing? There's one thing, Charlotte, I must show you at once. (Goes to the door of the music room). Look at it from here.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, the Gainsborough! How amazing!

SOLOMON: Have you ever seen the picture before, Lady Helen? It's from the Marquis of Kingston's collection.

LADY HELEN: Well, rather! It's my great-grandmother. My father sold it. It was one of the last to go. I'm always meeting my relatives on other people's walls, and sometimes I have to be introduced to them—if they my day, I mean. But



But Lady Helen does not wait. She leaves the room by one door as Thayer enters by another.

were sold before Duchess of Staffordshire. She was our greatest favorite, and we kept her as long

as we could possibly afford her. Go in and take a look at the tapestries, Charlotte. I maintain that they are not good.

SOLOMON: Lady Helen and I have had a controversy about those tapestries. It may be that she is right. (*CHARLOTTE follows him into the music room.*)

ALICE (*turning to* LADY HELEN): It seems to me that you know something about everything in the world.

LADY HELEN: Oh, no! Englishwomen aren't educated, you know. Our brothers are, but we aren't. My father used to say that my education cost him less than his oysters. I don't believe that I was ever educated three hundred pounds' worth in my life.

ALICE: Yet you know everything.

LADY HELEN: Don't let me dazzle you, my child. I'm a very ignorant woman, as you'll find out in good time if you see me often.

ALICE: I'll probably keep my illusions about you then—for I'm to sail next week. I'm going to Paris.

LADY HELEN: But isn't that a very stupid thing for you to do—to leave New York when you're such a success?

ALICE (*coolly*): Singing every night is hurting my voice. I want something more than a musical-comedy career. I'm restless here. So I'm going back to my teacher in Paris, and the next time I'm a success I hope it will be as *Mimi* or *Butterfly*. (*LADY HELEN looks at her searchingly. ALICE smiles steadily.*)

A little later, Charlotte and Harry divulge their plans to take Lady Helen home to England with them for the summer. She is deeply touched.

LADY HELEN (*alone with* HARRY): You and Charlotte don't really want me to go home with you? I'd love it—but—

HARRY: We do want you—if you want to come. Oh, Helen— (*He covers his face with his hands.*)

LADY HELEN: What is it? Tell me, my dear.

HARRY (*hopelessly*): You know I've always loved you. But I'm not a magnificent person—and magnificence is in your blood. I've never had anything to offer you. I've little now—I can't really afford you. Only—I can't bear to see you drift like this. You're like a lost child in an uncaring crowd. You think it's fun—being lost in a crowd. But after a while night will come, and you'll get tired, and maybe frightened. If only you were safe! Not drifting—not wandering—not lost!

LADY HELEN (*quietly*): Don't bother about me. I'm very clever at taking care of myself.

HARRY: That isn't true. I know of all sorts of things you've done that prove you know nothing about taking care of yourself. I happen to know that you sold some pearls in London for a few thousand pounds or so when they were worth ten times as much. What you'll do when your jewels are all gone—

LADY HELEN (*interrupting with a smile*): Let us hope that I'll buy others.

HARRY (*rising*): Very well. Let us hope that you'll buy others—but if it happens that you don't—after your last pearl is gone—and if you're tired, or frightened—remember that I've enough for a cottage in the country, and come home and marry me, if you like. I'm sorry that I cannot offer you myself and all my worldly possessions with more of a fine flourish, but—

LADY HELEN: Oh, I couldn't, my dear! I could never litter your life with the broken-up fragments of my own—not even if I drifted forever. Harry, I've a very great affection for you. But—if I were your mother, I wouldn't let you marry me. I wouldn't have let you do it even when I was a girl and you a very romantic boy, and there were no other reasons than my extravagancies and my recklessness. Some men could afford my extravagancies, and cope with my recklessness, perhaps. I thought Bruce was one of them. But not you, my dear—

HARRY: If Rudolph Solomon is one of them—then in God's name, marry him! But don't drift.

After Harry has gone, Rudolph Solomon returns to Lady Helen and presses his suit, telling her that her reason for refusing him no longer exists—that Alice Vance, of her own accord, is leaving him.

SOLOMON: I have thought of you, and only you, for months. I know you very well—better than any one in the world knows you. You fascinated me from the moment I met you three years ago, in London—when you used to let me invite you to luncheon sometimes—and nearly always forgot to come—or, when you came, forgot my name.

LADY HELEN: I have always been stupid about names.

SOLOMON (*gravely*): Particularly your own. Oh, I know that if it were not so, you would still be forgetting mine. But



Lady Helen's Last Adventure.



THAYER: I've come back a man! You did the right thing, but I—I don't dare think of what I did to you.

if mine were yours, would you be as careless of it as you have been of your own? Would you, I wonder? I want to ask you to marry me. But—I'm very proud of my name, Helen. That may seem a little silly to one whose ancestors have written themselves down, generation after generation, in the history of England. But I *am* proud of it. And it hurts me to give it into the keeping of one who has already been so careless about her own. What are you, anyway, Helen? A mother who never had a child? An artist without a talent? A courtesan born to the purple? What are you?

LADY HELEN (*simply*): It doesn't matter.

SOLOMON: But it does matter! I love you. You belong here—in my house. I didn't know that I loved you until a week ago when I looked into your heart, and found another love there—the thing that cut you adrift, I suppose, and sent you all soiled and broken to me.

LADY HELEN (*gently*): No—it was not love that cut me adrift. Whatever has happened, it wasn't that. My life has been just one of those mistakes that sometimes hap-

pen, from the very beginning. No one is responsible—except myself. But don't marry me—

SOLOMON: Hush! I want to see you moving through these rooms, every day of my life— (*He breaks off suddenly.*) Who was the man—the one you cared for?

LADY HELEN: His name would mean nothing.

SOLOMON: Do you—do you—ever see him now?

LADY HELEN: No. I don't know where he is. I have never heard from him since the night he cheated at cards. He went hating me. I shall never see him again.

SOLOMON: All the same, he is the ghost that walks in your heart. How do I know—how do you know—what you would do if you ever saw him again?

LADY HELEN: Rudolph, it was such a brief love—it died so soon—that it was like a child of Never-never Land. Sometimes its ghost has walked in my heart, but perhaps that has been because my heart was such an empty house.

SOLOMON: Do you care for me? Will you marry me?

LADY HELEN: I—I like you. I've great respect for you. What I might come to feel for you I don't know. I can see how life with you would be very easy—very easy and beautiful. And you know that—if you want to marry me—I should be mad if I refused.

SOLOMON (*taking a string of pearls from his pocket*): You have been selling these, one by one. Put them on. (*She bends her neck while he fastens the pearls.*)

LADY HELEN (*in a low voice*): Thanks.

SOLOMON (*holding her by the shoulders*): You will be good, won't you? You're so reckless—like a wind. But you will take care, won't you? Ah! let all the old, miserable gossip die?

LADY HELEN: I'll take care. I promise. I'll be good. I'll be quite a reformed character, Rudolph, if you talk to me like that.

She leaves him then, and other guests come and go. Suddenly Thayer is announced. He has been in Africa and has made his fortune. Solomon greets him warmly and, although late for dinner, leads him to the dining room, telling him on the way that he will know at least one of the evening's guests—Lady Helen Haden, who is soon to become his wife.

Still another unexpected guest arrives—Mrs. Leslie, who craves financial advice from Solomon. She rudely refuses to speak to Lady Helen, who has entered the room, and Solomon informs her that she is insulting his future wife. Then Harry Charteris insists that Mrs. Leslie must apologize to Lady Helen, and recalls the fact that she once cheated at cards. Mrs. Leslie, much frightened, obeys, but at the same time lays the whole blame for that incident on "Lady Helen's friend, Ned Thayer!"

Solomon knows then who the man is that Lady Helen once loved—still loves, he feels sure. And Thayer is in the house. He knows there is only one thing for him to do.

SOLOMON (*with difficulty*): Lady Helen—I am going to say something which may seem strange to you. I think it would be a mistake for us to go through with this marriage. You don't understand—but you will in a moment. There is some one else

who can explain better than I. Wait here — (*He goes toward the door of the dining room.*)

LADY HELEN: Don't bother to explain, my friend. It might be awkward; and it isn't necessary. I can imagine so many more reasons than any one could possibly tell me. Good night. I shall never be sorry for those few intimate moments when I felt that I knew a remarkable person very well indeed, and when I had the very novel sensation of being safe and at peace.

SOLOMON (*haltingly*): I want you to know that this—was very difficult for me. Wait here. (*He goes out quickly.*)

But Lady Helen does not wait. Overcome with sudden weariness, cast off, as she thinks, by the man who had asked her to marry him, bitter and penniless, she walks out of the room by one door as Thayer enters by another.

There is an accident. Lady Helen, as she crosses the street, is struck by a passing motor. Unconscious, she is carried back into the house. A sort of paralysis falls on the guests—a premonition that this is the end for the last of the Varvicks.

LADY HELEN (*opening her eyes*): Let me sit up. I'm sorry. I oughtn't to have dashed in front of that taxi like that. It didn't like it. (*Her voice weakens. In an agony of pain she faints. When her eyes open again, she sees CHARLOTTE hovering over her.*) Don't worry about me. I hope it's the end. It ought to be, at any rate—it would be such a regular Varvick ending. One ought to have something in common with one's family—even if it's only one's death. Draw that curtain a little wider, Charlotte dear, so that I see my great great-grandmother there—across the river— (*Smiling at Solomon*) It's very considerate of you to have invited Georgina, Duchess of Staffordshire, to meet me to-night— (*EDWARD THAYER comes forward, trembling. Slowly she recognizes him.*) It's—Ned! (*He flings himself down beside her, covering his face with his hands.*)

THAYER: Helen!

LADY HELEN: Ned—I don't understand. Is it a dream, my dear? It must be a dream.

SOLOMON: You are not dreaming. He has come back—a man!

THAYER (*lifting his face*): Yes—I've come back—a man. I've wanted to thank you a million times. I went to South Africa—but it doesn't matter where I went or what

I did. The only thing that matters is that you saved me. I've worked. I've been honest. I've made good—and I don't know what I would have been except for you. And I've been in torture whenever I've thought of you—and remembered what I'd done. I've heard of you now and then, and I came back to find you, and ask you if you'd forgive me—and marry me—and go back with me. I thought it was the only decent thing I could do. You were right—when you said there'd be other springtimes, and maybe one girl for all of them. I've found her now. I thought I hated all women for a while. Then I began to think how decent you'd been to me—even though you seemed so cruel that night. And before long you got sort of holy to me—like a sister or a good angel. Then I met the girl. You remember what you said about hoping that she and I would be very happy together and very sad apart as long as we lived. That's just how it is with us. But we'd made up our mind that we ought to be sad if—if some of the things we'd heard were true—and you needed me. If I hadn't found you were going to marry Rudolph Solomon, you'd never have known about her. (*LADY HELEN faints again.*)

LADY HELEN (her eyelids fluttering open): Ned—what were you telling me? I got lost. You came to find me, dear, and what else? I didn't seem to hear the rest. It's too wonderful—

THAYER: I said that I'd come to ask you to be my wife.

SOLOMON (soothingly): It's all right.

LADY HELEN: Rudolph—I see how life with you would have been very easy and very beautiful. I did, really. I was quite disappointed when you threw me over to-night. I didn't know it was because Ned had come back. And Ned—hold my hand—we're drifting out on the tide, together. Rather jolly, isn't it? (*A convulsion suddenly shakes her. She clings to THAYER.*) Just you—and my young—great—great-grandmother, in her big hat—there—across the river—and the gay music! Everything else—is—going. It's like the theater—when they turn out the lights—before the curtain rises—on the next act— (*Her head falls forward. She does not speak again.*)

SOLOMON (quietly): She was a queen without a kingdom. Tell them to stop the music now.

CURTAIN.



A ROSE—A KISS—AND YOU!

MORN, and the lily's cup of pearl
Spills all its sparkling dew,
While, passion-steeped, a rosebud opes
To breathe my love for you.

Noon, with the Sun God bending low
The violet's heart to woo—
A songbird's trill in a garden fair—
A rose—a kiss—and you!

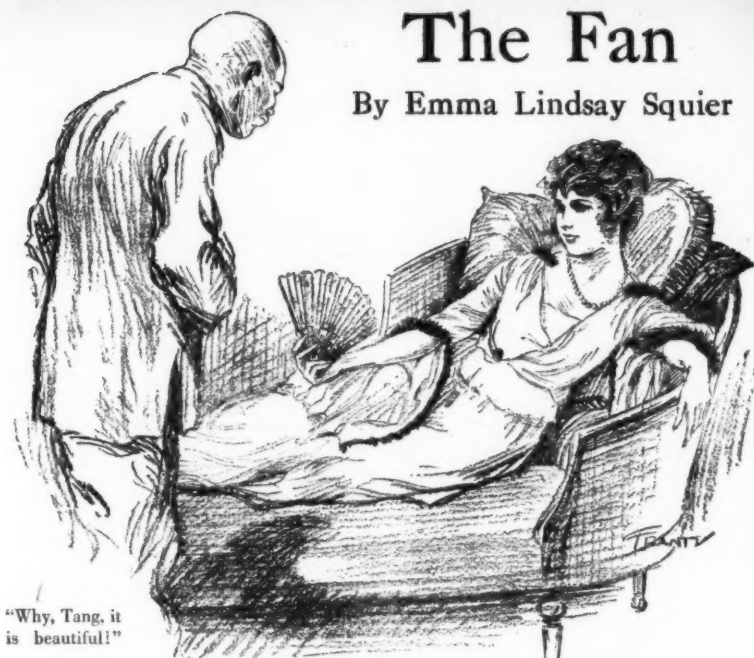
Dusk, and a scarlet poppy gleam,
Where morn's pale lily grew,
And in the gloaming, silver-kissed,
Love's rose waits for you.

Night, with the moon serenely fair,
And star breaks peeping, too—
A songbird's trill in a garden sweet—
A rose—a kiss—and you!
A rose—a kiss—and you!

AGNES LOCKHART HUGHES.

The Fan

By Emma Lindsay Squier



"Why, Tang, it is beautiful!"

ILLUSTRATED BY MARSHALL FRANTZ

This is the story of a Chinaman in America, with the moral philosophy of an older civilization; the story of a woman who believed that East and West could meet, that the Oriental mind could be turned from its groove of centuries into the broader path of Occidental ways. It is the story of a maidservant with the petty vices of her kind; and it is the story of a fan.

TANG WAN was a cook to gladden one's heart. For three years he served in the family of Mr. and Mrs. Alden, and there was never a shadow upon the brightness of his conduct. Honest and scrupulous to an amazing degree, faithful to the interests of his employers, and attached, doglike, to little five-year-old Peter, he was a model of his kind; and Mrs. Alden used him as an example when putting forward one of her pet theories that the Chinese can become Americanized both in habit and mentality, Kipling and sociologists to the contrary, notwithstanding.

"Look at Tang Wan," she would say with her earnest, pretty voice, that had a childlike quality that carried far more force than her arguments. "He is a real American. He has cut off his queue, he goes to Sunday school with Peter, and I'm *positive* he's a Christian."

Once a noted sociologist and writer, a man who had lived many years in the Far East, expressed a contrary opinion.

"Your Tang Wan may be an exception," Sidney Brand had said to her, "but I doubt it. The Oriental and Occidental minds are as far apart as the poles, and only centuries of intercommunication can bring them together.

The Chinaman has brought his ideas from a past that was old when our civilization was but beginning. He regards our ideas with Oriental aloofness. He does not seek to change them and, indeed, appears to adapt them. But the adaptation is only skin-deep. Underneath the veneer of modernism there is his age-old soul, steeped in the tradition of centuries. We seldom even glimpse it, and, glimpsing it, we cannot comprehend it."

Mrs. Alden had remarked to her husband after this conversation that Mr. Brand was doubtless a very bright man, but that he certainly did not understand character—Chinese character, at least. She said so earnestly and with childlike emphasis; and as she watched Tang Wan move about the kitchen with a soft little "slup-slup" of loose slippers, his deft, lemon-colored fingers busy at the work of preparing the evening meal, she was more than sure that she was right.

"Tang," she said suddenly, as she drew some snowy linen out of the linen drawer—it was her custom to set the table herself—"you are a Christian, aren't you?"

"Yeah," he said. "Suah—me Clistian—me take li'l boy Peter evely Sunday him chu'ch—me stay, too. Me plenty good Clistian!"

In spite of Tang Wan's pigeon English, Mrs. Alden never made the mistake of replying to him in like manner. She was a woman of rare tact, and felt rightly that Tang Wan would resent it.

"And are you a good American, too?" she pursued. "Do you *think* like Americans?"

Tang Wan lifted the lid of a kettle and smiled through the rising steam like a genie out of the "Arabian Nights."

"Suah—me plenty good Amelican," he assured her. "Been heah thlee, foah, five yeah—good Amelican."

"There!" said Mrs. Alden trium-

phantly to her husband, in telling him of it. "I knew that man was wrong!"

Her opinion was heightened even more when Tang Wan brought to her a brooch set with emeralds which she had mislaid some weeks before and given up for lost. Tang Wan had found it glittering in a pile of waste paper which was to be burned in the back yard; and though he might easily have sold it to his own advantage, he did nothing of the kind, and returned it to her. Mrs. Alden told her husband with as much pleasure as she had received it. Nor was this an unusual occurrence; for Tang Wan had shown himself too honest to steal even a penny. He was in full charge of the kitchen and might have grafted pettily, had he chosen, but he did not. He haggled with the butcher and the grocer, beating down the vegetable man's prices by sheer ability to talk the longest, and so reduced household expenses to a minimum. It was certainly true that Tang Wan was a model servant.

He had a family in China of whom he told Mrs. Alden. A man-child, who would be ten years old the next Chinese New Year, a baby girl, whose name was Gim Koon, and lastly, a wife. The wife and the girl baby counted for little, of course, but Tang Wan was saving what was left of his wages, after he sent off a monthly amount to China, to return some day and see his eldest born, for whom he had ambitions that he should not forever remain in the coolie class, his ideas along this line having been acquired by rubbing up against American democracy.

About this time a disturbing element entered into the peaceful Alden household, introduced by Mrs. Alden herself, who was, of course, quite unconscious of the friction.

Norah Murphy was of Irish parentage and had a sort of rugged peasant beauty. Her wrists and ankles were large and her figure was inclined to

heaviness; but her eyes were blue and fringed with black lashes, and her dark hair made heavy coils around her head.

Mrs. Alden was expecting shortly an addition to the family, and had hired Norah from an employment agency as a housemaid.

Norah Murphy and Tang Wan were natural enemies from the first moment of meeting. She sneered at him openly and apostrophized him as "that dirty, yellow heathen!" And Tang Wan, though he did not express himself in words, looked at her out of the corners of his slanted, inscrutable eyes, and while enduring her insults with apparent equanimity, never missed an opportunity to annoy or make her uncomfortable. If she left anything in the refrigerator to be eaten after supper, he threw it out. If her young man, the grocer's clerk, called for her at the kitchen door, Tang Wan failed to understand his inquiries for Norah, and let him wait on the steps an interminable length of time until the girl discovered him there. In many another subtle way did the placid, slant-eyed Oriental weigh down the scales of insult and injury on Norah's side of the balance. His annoyances were so cleverly arranged that Norah herself could not put her fingers upon them, but for this reason they enraged her the more, and she took refuge in flinging coarse and still coarser gibes at him and his nationality, in which the eating of rats, drowning of girl babies, and worshipping heathen idols formed a background for still more lurid personal remarks.

But even with this enmity, born of different races and standards, peace might have reigned in the Alden household had it not been for Norah Murphy's inability to keep her hands off things that did not belong to her. She possessed a happy-go-lucky sense of ownership that quite disregarded the fact that though Mrs. Alden had forgotten a pair of white kid gloves re-

cently returned from the cleaners, and had thrown them carelessly upon the shelf of her wardrobe closet, they were not hers—Norah's—to take. She argued to herself—if, indeed, she stopped to think of it at all—that Mrs. Alden did not want the gloves any longer, else she would have put them in the drawer where they belonged, and so she took them for her own use on Sunday afternoons when she went out driving with her young man in his Ford.

That Mrs. Alden knew of Norah's weakness is certain, but the pilferings were small, and she was a valuable servant, strong and willing and good-natured—excepting with Tang Wan.

However, Mrs. Alden's patience gave out when, one evening, preparing to go to the theater—it would be her last pleasure jaunt for some time, she laughingly told her husband—she discovered that her favorite fan, a dainty thing of ivory and lace, was missing. True, one of the ivory sticks had been broken, and she, thinking to have it mended, had placed it on the shelf of her wardrobe closet, but, wishing to carry it, she decided that a bow of ribbon would hide the broken part. When she looked for it, it was gone. Nora Murphy, questioned, stoutly maintained her ignorance, asserted that she had not seen the fan, had not touched it, and grew first defiant, then tearful at the idea of even being suspected of purloining it.

Neither Mrs. Alden nor Norah Murphy knew, as they argued, that outside the door of Mrs. Alden's bedroom, Tang Wan listened, immovable in the shadows. While his vocabulary was not equal to everything that was said, he understood enough. He understood that Missy Alden, who to him was the first lady of the land, sorrowed because of a stolen fan. That Norah had taken it he did not for an instant doubt. The Oriental method of justice is based on the premise that a suspect is guilty until he proves himself otherwise.



Norah Murphy and Tang Wan were natural enemies from the first moment of their meeting. She sneered at him openly, and apostrophized him as "that dirty, yellow heathen!"

When he slipped up to his own room, his slanted eyes were narrowed to mere slits, but otherwise his face was as expressionless as ever.

Inside the room, Norah's tears had become angry ones.

"All right then," she was saying in the overloud tone of one who is in the wrong, yet seeks to establish innocence by being the aggressor, "if you think it's dishonest that I am, I'll be leaving you to-morrow. I'll not stay in a place where I'm suspected of being a thief! Why should I work, anyway? Isn't there my young man, beggin' me every day of the world to give up slavin' for ungrateful people and marry him? And that's what I'm goin' to do, indeed it is! To-morrow you'll not have me with you to insult and call a thief

—you'll not, indeed! I'll be married and off on a honeymoon, and you can get along with your dirty heathen chink if you can!"

The "dirty heathen chink" was at that very moment in his little attic room, the door of which he kept tightly locked during the day and in which no one ever intruded. His lemon-colored fingers were busily clicking the little brown buttons of a Chinese counting machine. He was turning over in his mind whether he could save enough out of his wages, when the monthly allowance was sent off to China, to buy a certain fan that was in the store of his friend, Hong Quai, the merchant, whose Oriental Bazaar in the front was merely a blind, and the means of entrance to a lottery room behind, and

an upstairs den of illicit and expensive pleasure. The fan was a wondrous thing of gold and jade, with the thinnest of silk painted in marvelous colors, and it was edged with heavy gold leaf. Such a gift would be worthy to be put into the lily-white hands of Missy Alden; and such a noble fan, wrought by the hands of a skilled workman, would no doubt heal the sorrow in her heart for the loss of the other. She had lost a fan and she sorrowed. Could not he, Tang Wan, replace it?

He put the counting machine back on the shelf. There was not enough money—there could not be enough. It would take all of his wages for several months to come, and that could not be, for there was a man-child in China whose future depended upon that monthly letter from America. No, it could not be.

Then Tang Wan took up the small sheaf of lottery tickets printed on squares of thin rice paper, all topped with crude representations of overflowing bags of gold and marked both in Chinese and English with the magic words, "Grand Prize—\$10,000." There were many of these, and Tang Wan fingered them over and over, looking at the brush marks over the numbers, comparing his tickets with copies of those that had drawn large amounts of money. After a little while, he rose and lighted a joss stick before a squat little idol on an improvised altar, and burned a red prayer paper with gilt letters on it.

Mrs. Alden, of course, did not know of the joss stick and the idol. Neither did she know of the lottery store behind Hong Quai's Oriental Bazaar. Tang Wan proceeded on the strictly Oriental assumption that what one does not know will not hurt one.

In Mrs. Alden's bedroom, the argument still raged. The question of the fan had resolved itself into something vastly more important. Norah must

not go like that; she surely would not leave her—especially just at this time; and not after she had promised to stay. The fan would not matter. She was welcome to it, Mrs. Alden said, or—hastily reconsidering—she would have been welcome to it if she had taken it, thinking it to be of no value. If her suspicions had been ungrounded, Norah must consider that she was quick of tongue—more so just now than ordinarily—and wouldn't she forgive and stay with her?

Norah Murphy felt that the victory was gained, but she was in no mood to make any great concession.

"Maybe I'll stay, and maybe I'll not," she said, pursing up her lips and tossing her head. "I don't know that I owe any gratitude to any one that suspects me of bein' dishonest. And I don't see why I should keep sayin' 'no' to a clean, hard-workin' young man that's always beggin' me to say 'yes.' I don't know what I'll do, at all. I'll make up my mind to-morrow, but I'll give you no promise to-night."

By this time Mrs. Alden was so upset that she had no heart for the theater and sobbed uncontrollably on her husband's broad shoulder. He stroked her hair and told her he would change the tickets for next afternoon's matinée.

The next morning Norah maintained a sulky silence. Even a proffered bottle of perfume failed to soften her mood. Mr. Alden, disgusted by her attitude, and fearing a return attack of hysteria, carried Mrs. Alden off bodily to the matinée. When they returned, Norah Murphy was gone.

Tang Wan, questioned by the tearful Mrs. Alden, knew nothing of her or how she had gone. A machine had driven up to the door, the bell had rung, and Norah had answered it. He had not seen who had come in. His work in the kitchen had occupied him the whole afternoon.

Norah's room was found to be in pe-

cular order. A hat and coat were gone, but not the best hat and coat which it would seem that she would have worn on a honeymoon trip, and very few of her effects were missing.

Evidently, Mrs. Alden said to her husband bitterly, the marriage had been a hasty one and the arrangements for the wedding trip even more hurried. She cried when she said that if she had not made a fuss about the fan, Norah would have stayed with her until the new baby came. Her husband kissed her many times and won her away from grief by promising to invade the employment agencies himself and bring home a veritable treasure of a housemaid to take Norah's place.

Only Tang Wan showed no surprise at the girl's disappearance. That night, before he slipped down to the lottery behind the store of Hong Quai with his small sheath of rice-paper tickets, he lighted a joss stick and prayed for luck.

The gods must have smiled upon Tang Wan that night, for when he returned to his tiny room in the attic, he was carrying a long, slender parcel, wrapped in brown paper; and in his leather wallet there was a large roll of bills. He was smiling as he unwrapped the package and disclosed a fan of shimmering silk and gold, with carved sticks of jade and a tassel of green and gold threads.

But he did not give the fan to Missy Alden in the morning, as he had planned, for she was taken away to the hospital, and Tang Wan was left in charge of the disconsolate Peter, whose interest in the promised brother was dulled by the loneliness he felt for his mother.

When Mr. Alden returned to the house that night, it was with a face very white, but with eyes that were shining. Tang Wan knew at once that all was well with Missy Alden, and when he was told that the child was a boy, his face relaxed from its usual

placidity and he smiled broadly. That night, before going down to the lottery, he bowed thrice before the squat little image, and after he had placed the smoking joss sticks upright in the dish of sand, he took two black, polished gourd shells from the altar, clapped them together, and let them drop from his hands to the floor, where he saw by the way they had fallen that luck was to be with the new man-child. Then, filled with the sense of having been instrumental in bringing good fortune to the child, he made his way to the lottery, where he bought several tickets, but won no money.

The next evening before dinner Mr. Alden entered the kitchen where Tang Wan was busily preparing the meal, and his face wore a puzzled frown.

"Tang," he said, "I have just learned that Norah did not elope, as we supposed."

Tang Wan looked blank.

"Elope—get married!" Mr. Alden translated. This time Tang Wan nodded. "We thought she went away with the grocery boy," he went on, speaking slowly while Tang Wan listened impassively. "But the boy came here asking for her; he has not seen her and wants to know where she is."

Tang Wan's face expressed the slightest bit of surprise.

"She no go get married?" he questioned.

Mr. Alden shook his head.

"No, she didn't."

Tang Wan shrugged his shoulders ever so slightly and shuffled over to the stove.

"She velly funny ge'l," he observed. "She get mad, she tell Miss Alden she go, and she go—maybe get other job."

"Yes," Mr. Alden agreed, "there's no telling what she might do; but it looks very queer. We'll not tell Miss Alden about it when she comes home. She must not worry about anything."

And so it happened that when Mrs.

Alden came back from the hospital two weeks later, looking a little pale, but very happy, nothing was said to her of the developments in the disappearance of Norah Murphy. She was too happy to think of her at all.

On the day that she came back from the hospital and was ensconced in a chaise longue piled with soft cushions, Tang Wan brought to her his gift in its brown paper wrappings.

"A fan!" she cried delightedly, as she unfolded the exquisite thing which shimmered with gold on green like sunlight on deep, mysterious waters. "Why, Tang, it is beautiful! But you shouldn't have bought it for me. It must have been very——" She decided that she would not remark upon the expense—after all, it was Tang's affair. Instead, she thanked him prettily and lifted the eiderdown blanket that covered the tiny form of her second-born son so that Tang Wan could see him.

"Velly fine boy!" he said, smiling broadly, and went back to the kitchen thinking of his own man-child in China.

Of course, Mrs. Alden found out later that her ex-housemaid had not gone away to be married. The grocer's boy, whose first pique had changed into alarm at the continued absence of any word from Norah, came to Mrs. Alden and insisted that the police be notified. She at once agreed, and a search resulted. Had Norah been any one of prominence, her mysterious disappearance might have become a sensation. But servant girls come and servant girls go, and who can keep track of their whims? Perhaps Norah had gone back to the old country; perhaps she had married some former suitor; perhaps—but all suppositions failed.

Tang Wan told the police of hearing a machine drive up to the front door. He had thought it was the grocer's boy in his Ford and had not gone outside of the kitchen. His story was

corroborated by a neighbor, who had also heard the machine go up the driveway, and who had seen Tang working in the summer kitchen at the same time, making jelly. It would have been impossible for any of the neighbors to have seen what took place after the car turned up the driveway, for there was a porte-cochère under which it would stop and which would effectively conceal any one who entered or came out of the house. The search proved unavailing, and the disappearance of Norah Murphy became another of those unsolved mysteries which honeycomb the annals of every large city.

In the inquiries made, Mrs. Alden stanchly seconded Tang Wan's testimony that he knew nothing of the disappearance of Norah Murphy. She vouched for his morals and character with convincing enthusiasm, and her story of Norah's threat to leave seemed to indicate that the girl had gone away hurriedly yet deliberately, and that if any misfortune had happened to her, she had brought it upon herself.

Then Tang Wan went back to China. He proudly showed the fat roll of bills in his wallet to Mrs. Alden. There was enough money, he explained, to permit him to go back to China and wear upon his cap the green button of the respected merchant class, which would mean that his son would belong no more to the coolie class. Sorry as she was to have him leave, she was unselfish in her joy that his ambitions were at last to be realized.

"But how have you saved all the money?" she asked him.

"Me? Oh, me win plize on ticket," he answered readily.

Mrs. Alden was genuinely shocked.

"Oh, Tang," she exclaimed, "you mean you have been gambling in a lottery? And is that how you got the money to buy the fan you gave me?"

Tang Wan, sensing a reprimand, hunched his shoulders and listened

passively to the lecture that Mrs. Alden gave against gambling. When she had finished, Tang Wan said, "Yeah, Missy Alden," and proceeded to pare the potatoes for dinner.

"I feel queer about that fan," she said to her husband that night, as she related what Tang had told her. "It was a fan, you know, that really caused Norah's disappearance, and now this one, that I thought was come by honestly, he won by gambling. I'd give it back to him if it weren't for hurting his feelings."

Mr. Alden laughed and said that gambling at a lottery was no crime; that winning money in that way was no worse than winning it in a raffle at a church bazaar; and that if Tang Wan had been lucky enough to win some real money she should be the last to censure him.

So Tang Wan went back to China and his man-child. Another cook was installed in his place in the Alden household.

Years passed to the number of five, and Tang Wan had become only an idealized memory of a perfect cook and a model servant, and the name of Norah Murphy was even more remote.

And then, one evening at a theater party, Mr. and Mrs. Alden met Sidney Brand, the sociologist and author who had argued with Mrs. Alden years before. After recalling the circumstances of that meeting, she leaned over to him with a gay little air of penitence.

"I owe you an apology," she said in her delightful, childlike voice. "You told me a Chinaman could not become Americanized under the skin. I thought you were wrong, and said so. Do you remember?"

The sociologist did not, as a matter of fact, but he lied gracefully and said that he did.

"You were right, after all," she went on. "Our cook, Tang Wan, whom I held up to you as the living proof of my

argument that evening, was after all the Chinese kind of a Chinaman."

Sidney Brand smiled at her phrasing, and asked for details.

"Can you imagine?" she went on, emphasizing her words with little taps of the gorgeous gold-and-jade fan that she carried. "After he left, I found that his room was a perfect Oriental den. Why, he had made an altar where I found the broken pieces of a little idol. I found dozens of old lottery tickets, and, what do you think—he had smoked opium! I never suspicioned it. His room was so situated that we didn't smell it or the joss sticks."

"I am not surprised," the sociologist said.

"No, I suppose not," she said, a little petulantly. "But I was. Why, he even bought me this fan," she continued, opening it for his admiring inspection, "with the money he won in a lottery!"

"Horrible!" exclaimed Brand laughingly. "And to think that you accepted it!"

Mrs. Alden blushed, and the others of the party laughed at her confusion. It was then that some one suggested that they go slumming after the performance. The sociologist offered his services as a guide through Chinatown.

And thus it happened that the party, an hour later, was seated in the upstairs room of a dingy Chinatown restaurant, where gaudy lanterns, hung outside on a narrow balcony, belied the sordidness within.

"You could not come here without me," he told them, after a fat, oily Chinaman had placed small cups of tea before them. "It is strictly for the Chinese, but I have been associated with them for so long that they know me and accord me many privileges."

A rat-eyed, blinking yellow man slipped up the stairs and glided across the room without seeing them in the shadow. His hands pressed a spring and a panel slid back noiselessly, dis-

closing a second door. He knocked cautiously, and the door opened with a click, showing a gleam of yellow light. In an instant he had stepped inside, the door closed, and with uncanny swiftness the panel glided into place again.

"Oh, how creepy!" gasped Mrs. Alden, and the other ladies of the party laughed a little nervously.

Mrs. Alden suddenly realized that the room was very stuffy and was permeated with an unsavory odor.

"What is in there?" she asked in a voice scarcely above a whisper.

The sociologist hesitated.

"An opium den, it is popularly called," he replied. "Chinatown is filled with such places. Men go there to smoke opium and—there are girls in there, both Chinese and white. 'Sing-Song girls,' they call them—'white slaves' is our name for them. Yet, it is true," he went on. A little shudder went around the table. "Some are sold and some sell themselves. They rarely see daylight, and they are all opium fiends. At first they smoke to forget, and then because they cannot stop. I know it is a distasteful subject," he went on apologetically, "but they do not feel their condition as keenly as they might. Their senses, moral and physical, are dulled by the use of the drug."

The knuckles of Mrs. Alden's hands showed white where they clutched the table.

"I can't believe it," she said in a low, tense voice. "It is possible that the police do not know——"

As if in answer to her question, there came a scurry of feet upon the narrow stairway. A lean Chinaman, the whites of his almond eyes showing in the darkness, jabbered some excited, sing-song sentences. The door of the kitchen opened, and the fat, oily Oriental who had served them with tea appeared, his features shaken out of their usual tranquillity. A third door opened, this one seeming to lead into a private office,



"Traded—a fan—for me!" And they heard her choking laughter as she was pulled down the stairs.

and a heavily-built Celestial appeared, clad in rich garments and wearing a round cap with a green button.

"The place is raided," Brand said briefly to his party. "Please do not be alarmed."

His sentence was broken off as there came another rush of feet upon the stairs. Before the three Chinamen could move they were covered with guns held in the hands of uniformed men.

"Hello, Hong Quai!" said the police sergeant who was in the lead, as he advanced to the Oriental in the rich garments. "Thought we'd pay you a little visit—you savvy 'visit'?"

Hong Quai put his hands in his sleeves and bowed slightly. But he did not speak. His face was utterly tranquil.

One of the officers had covered the sociologist and his party. But the sergeant, recognizing the former, nodded his head. "It's all right," he said briefly to the policeman, and the officer lowered his weapon.

"Well, Hong," he continued to the merchant, who had not changed his position, "are you going to tell us where you keep your loot and the girls, or are we going to have to search the place?"

"No savvy," Hong Quai returned placidly, and the sergeant jerked his head toward his men. "All right," he said, "bust in every panel. The door is here some place. Go ahead and find it."

Mrs. Alden seized her husband's arm. She was shaking from head to foot. The gorgeous fan had fallen to the floor where it shimmered in the murky light like a wounded butterfly. "If I could only tell them where it is!" she whispered.

"Quiet!" he replied. "They'll find it."

And they did. The next instant there was a resounding clash of iron on wood.

The grimy panel splintered as an ax went through, and from the other side of the door there came a muffled scream.

"Break it in!" said the sergeant tersely, and two axes crushed against the door, drove through it, tore it open. There was a sudden pandemonium of sounds—hysterical screams, the sound of men scuffling and cursing, the rush of feet to a concealed exit, and then the stern command, "Stand still, you Chinks, or I'll plug every one of you!"

Whether or not the words were understood, the tone of the threat was sufficient. There was silence, broken only by the heavy breathing of men and the whimpering of women. The little party in the outer room pressed close against each other, as if for protection. Only the sociologist was calm.

"Hong Quai," he said in Chinese, "I warned you of this. You have run your head into a noose of your own making."

Hong Quai smiled faintly.

"A noose can be cut with a golden knife," he replied in the same language.

And Sidney Brand knew that was true. Hong Quai was a very rich man. He would be at liberty within a very short time.

"Come out of there, you!" shouted the sergeant to the huddled group in the inner room. "Step lively—out you come! Hands up!"

What the Orientals did not understand in words, they gathered by inflection and gestures. One at a time, hands raised above their heads, yellow lips ashen with fear, almond eyes darting ratlike, seeking some chance of escape, they filed out of the gaping panel—women with sodden, expressionless faces; men with the reek of opium strong upon them; Chinese girls, half-clad; Mexican girls with swarthy, puffy cheeks; white girls with glazed, staring eyes and loose, sagging lips. It was a procession to make one sick at heart, and as they filed down the stairs, the

officers tallying them as they passed. Mrs. Alden hid her face against her husband's shoulder.

What it was that made her look up, she did not know; but she raised her eyes to encounter those of the last girl—a white girl, who had stopped before her. The girl had sunken, expressionless eyes, and her face was unhealthy, pasty white. She was dressed in the trousers and jacket of the Chinese woman, and her thick black hair was coiled about her head in Oriental fashion. She had raised the green-and-gold fan from the floor and was staring at it with eyes stretched wide, as if some door in her benumbed consciousness was struggling to open.

The policeman, at first thinking she had picked up the fan to return it to its owner, had not jostled her into line. But when she still fingered it, staring blankly, he spoke sharply.

"Come on, you! Drop that and get downstairs into the wagon."

Then Mrs. Alden spoke, putting out a trembling hand. "Please!" she pleaded in a whisper. "If I could have just one word with her—"

The officer looked at the sergeant, who nodded.

Mrs. Alden had risen and was facing the girl, whose staring eyes never lifted from the gorgeous fan that she fingered mechanically. Mrs. Alden was struggling with memory, too. Her request to the officer had been from impulse rather than reason. Now, in looking at the girl, she wondered. Where had she seen her—where? Was it fancy, or had she known that heavy yet graceful figure before? The girl's eyes were blue—blue eyes with dark lashes—a heavy, sullen mouth—

Five years is a long time in which to keep a servant girl's face in mind, yet the name came suddenly to Mrs. Alden, as if some one had spoken it.

"Norah Murphy!" she said distinctly. The girl raised her head and stared at

her with a slight contraction of the eyebrows.

"You are Norah Murphy," Mrs. Alden said slowly.

The girl's lips moved as if with difficulty.

"Norah—Murphy," she repeated in a tone that was flat and lifeless, and which seemingly came from a great distance. "Norah—Murphy—" Her brows contracted suddenly, as if from a spasm of thought.

"You *are* Norah Murphy, aren't you?" Mrs. Alden persisted. "Try to think. I'm sure you are!"

Again the pallid lips parted.

"Don't—think—so," she said thickly and with difficulty. "I—knew some—one—once—Norah—Murphy—think—so—" Her voice trailed away into silence.

Mrs. Alden looked helplessly at her husband, but the sergeant intervened.

"Don't fret yourself about her, ma'am," he said. "She's a hop head and worse. She's forgotten all she ever knew. Well, Hong," he said, turning back to the merchant, who had not changed his position or expression. "Guess we'll take a little ride in the wagon, eh?" He motioned for the Oriental to precede him down the stairs. As Hong Quai moved, the girl seemed to see him for the first time. The glazed look dropped away from her eyes as if it had been a curtain. She was staring at him, at Mrs. Alden, at the gold-and-jade fan, and a rush of blood suddenly mounted to her sunken cheeks.

"You—Hong Quai!" she cried, speaking in a stuttering, high-pitched voice. "This—fan—" Her wild eyes fixed themselves on Mrs. Alden's blanched face and she laughed suddenly, a loud, unnatural laugh. "You said I stole your fan," she mouthed. "Well, I did take it—old, broken fan! No good to you. You got another fan—Tang Wan bought you this fan—bought it of Hong Quai." She sud-

denly shrieked with mad, hysterical laughter and, catching the fan in her hands, she tugged at it, shredding it to bits. The sergeant caught her wrists, but the gorgeous thing fluttered to the floor, a broken, shredded tangle of gold and jade. The girl was still laughing hysterically.

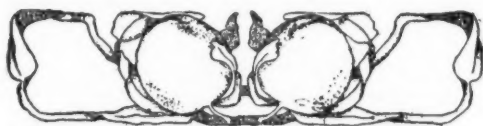
"Some bargain, eh, Hong Quai?" she said, as the officer jerked her toward the door. "Traded—a fan—for me!" And they heard her choking laughter as she was pulled down the stairs.

Mrs. Alden swayed a little. The rest of the party moved as if by common consent to the stairway.

"I—I can't believe it," she said brokenly. Her husband drew her gently away. "A girl's life broken like that fan because Tang Wan thought I wanted one! I can't understand——"

The sociologist looked down at the ruined bauble.

"None of us can," he said gently. Yet he, perhaps, understood better than any.



BEHIND DOORS IN BOHEMIA

A NUMBER of empty bottles—

Some crumpled napkins—

A broken dish—

A reputation shattered—

Smoke, whirling and twisting—

Laughter—then silence. Then the buzz of many tongues. On the night air, a song——

A timid girl pinched her lover on the knee.

At the end of the table, an old man was making eyes at a slender girl.

Cécile, with tears in her eyes, was begging a good-looking youth to lead her sort of life.

Minnie reached for the green bottle—she had not had enough.

Leander was flirting with a woman he knew to be married.

Elsie wondered if that boy in the gray suit would ask to see her home—and if he did——

A fat woman started to sing. Some one, in mercy, threw a bottle at her.

A tall, æsthetic-looking man with long hair, rose.

"It is getting late—

Let us break up the party!"

A cry of protest.

"The night is yet young," giggled a woman past forty, who had just seen a boy press his scarlet lips to the cheek of a girl who did not rouge.

The tall man lifted his hand.

"Remember, there will be another Sunday-school picnic next year."

CARL GLICK.



WHAT THE STARS SAY



by Madame Renée Longuille

HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

LESSON I.

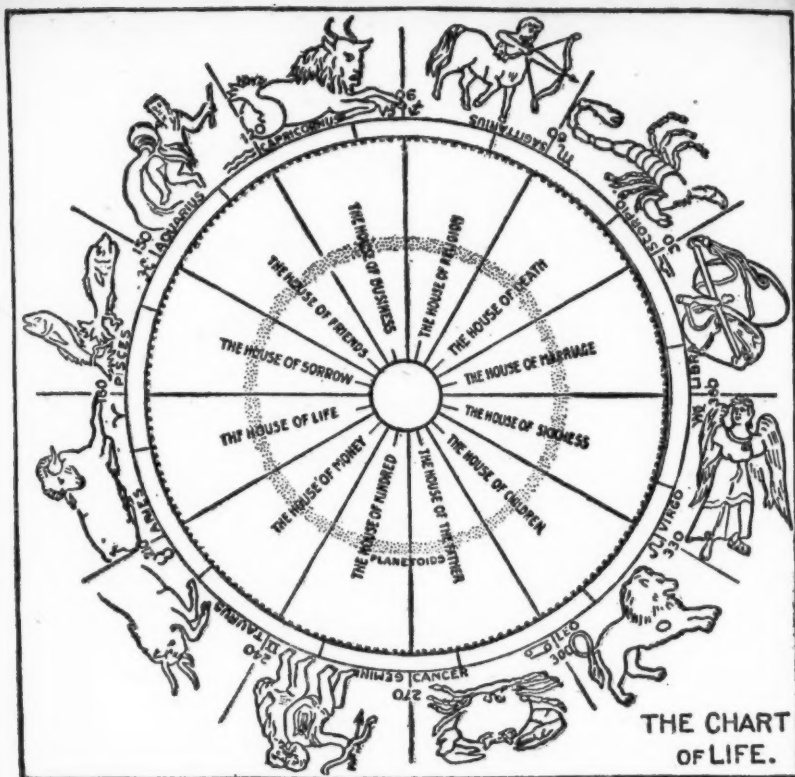
A HOROSCOPE is a plan of the heavens, showing the position of the principal planets at the moment of the subject's birth. After a very little study you may be able to determine your own character and, thus, destiny. Only an ordinary knowledge of arithmetic is necessary to compute a map of life by which the future big events may be quickly seen. Marriage or marriages, love affairs, much about your parents and their condition, children, profession, money, success, and failures are all marked to a degree. Sicknesses, losses, and accidents are often predicted within a year by a glance at the chart. You may also find out your temperaments and talents along any special line, thus saving yourself many years of useless labor on something inconsistent with your abilities. The question is often asked: "But what good does astrology do, anyway?" It would be superfluous to enumerate here the many events which astrologers have predicted, advance knowledge of which was of great benefit to the world. It is as hazardous to try to take a long night journey by automobile on a bad, unfamiliar road without headlights, as to go through life without the knowledge and aid of astrology. This science illuminates the dark path of life along which we are

all groping, showing special weaknesses as well as strength, predisposition to diseases, and tendencies in different directions. Without this powerful searchlight into the future we remain unaware of the many pitfalls and obstacles in the road, and are thus unable to avoid them or even to slow down and subdue the shock of coming upon them too suddenly.

We shall endeavor, in this study of astrology, to take the reader step by step so gradually that before he realizes it, he will be able not only to read much of his own past, present, and future, but also those of his friends and relatives. The ideal way is to be one's own astrologer. It is always more satisfactory to carry one's own headlights than to depend on some one else to project the light for one.

In most cases, the disbeliever and scoffer has never taken the time or made the smallest effort to learn even the fundamental rules of this most helpful and fascinating of all scientific studies.

As in the case of all other arts or sciences, there are a few monotonous rules and regulations to be learned and used mechanically. One must, for instance, memorize the marks or symbols which represent the twelve different zodiacal signs, and also the nine



heavenly planets with which we are to deal. Every horoscope or map of life is divided into these twelve signs of which:

The first is Aries, signified by the mark ♈ = The Ram.

The second is Taurus, signified by the mark ♉ = The Bull. (Notice the Bull's head and horns.)

The third is Gemini, signified by the mark ♊ = The Twins. (The two marks represent two little figures.)

The fourth is Cancer, signified by the mark ♋ = The Crab.

The fifth is Leo, signified by the mark ♌ = The Lion.

The sixth is Virgo, signified by the mark ♍ = The Virgin.

The seventh is Libra, signified by the mark ♎ = The Balance.

The eighth is Scorpio, signified by the mark ♏ = The Scorpion.

The ninth is Sagittarius, signified by the mark ♐ = The Archer. (Notice the arrow to the Archer's bow.)

The tenth is Capricorn, signified by the mark ♑ = The Goat.

The eleventh is Aquarius, signified by the mark ♒ = The Water Bearer. (This mark represents the rippling waves of water.)

The twelfth is Pisces, signified by the mark ♓ = The Two Fishes.

The symbols that stand for the nine planets are made thus:

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| The Sun ☉ | Mars ♂ |
| The Moon ☾ | Jupiter ♃ |
| Mercury ☿ | Saturn ♄ |
| Venus ♀ | Uranus ♅ |
| Neptune ♆ | |

After learning the meanings and influences of these few little marks, it will be as easy for you to know just what "☉ in ♈"—the Sun in the constellation Aries—influence means, as it is for the chemist when he sees H_2O . The use of symbols is a short, quick way of conveying an idea to the mind in concise form.

The planets, as we all know, move about in the heavens, each with its own particular motion. The distances between these bodies cause special influences, for good or bad, called "aspects." There are five important aspects, distinguished by little symbols, thus:

♌ = "Conjunction"—when two planets are very near together in the heavens.

♌ = "Sextile"—when two planets are sixty degrees, or two signs of the zodiac, apart. This always causes good vibrations.

☐ = "Square"—when two planets are ninety degrees, or three signs, apart. This causes a bad influence.

Δ = "Trine"—when two planets are a hundred and twenty degrees apart. This is always good.

♌ = "Opposition"—when two planets are a hundred and eighty degrees apart, or in quarters of the map exactly opposite to each other. This aspect is very bad.

By way of example, the influence of ☉ Δ ♃—The Sun in trine aspect to Jupiter—would always be good wherever found, because the little symbol Δ always means good, even if connected with the supposedly bad Saturn. On the other hand, the ☉ ☐ ♄—Sun in a square aspect to Jupiter—would

mean that the influence between the Sun and the great, beneficent Jupiter had been turned into bad.

These little symbols or marks should be drawn over and over again, until they are made as easily as a, b, c, before starting out to understand all that comes later. It seems a law of the universe that just so much mechanical calculation must be put into the foundation of everything, art as well as science.

An artist, on commencing to interpret his dream or inspiration with the medium of paint and canvas, cannot lie on a sofa and have his picture materialize through the smoke of his cigarette. He is obliged to get down to cold, material measuring and mechanical labor. Think of the monotonous hours of five-finger exercises with which the pianist must perfect his art. A piano student once said to the great Philip: "I dislike these dull exercises. I wish to play Chopin." To which the master replied: "Let me teach you these exercises. Then you may play Chopin yourself."

Fortunately, astrology has the least drudgery of any of these sciences or arts. After a few, simple rules are memorized, the rest is fascinating, convincing, and far from being a waste of time.

Answers to Correspondents.

B. N. G.—Born January 13, 1876, 7 p. m., Galveston, Texas. Female.—Being born with the Sun in Capricorn, in good aspect to Jupiter, helps to overcome an otherwise much afflicted map. The Moon in Leo is heavily afflicted by four planets, Uranus, Saturn, Jupiter, and Venus, showing a life full of many strange vicissitudes. Sudden changes, ill health, and a checkered career are strongly marked on this map of life. The Moon in conjunction with Uranus brings many important removals and denotes a powerful personal magnetism. The planet Saturn is most unkind on this chart, pointing out an adverse fate, with many sorrows and misfortunes to overcome. There will be much discontent and despondency felt during life. The health of this

native must have been very weak and ailing in youth. The Sun came to her assistance, and better things are promised for old age. Jupiter and Venus in conjunction has caused extravagance and carelessness, and brought about much of the disaster. This native is very apt to be victimized by others and falsely accused in many cases. There is, however, a steady, underlying ambition and love of beautiful things.

There will surely be a few good, steadfast friends to help her over the many obstacles in life. Peculiar love affairs are marred by jealousy and mistrust, and suddenly come to an end by changes and traveling. There is probably more than one union. One partner will help really to overcome many adverse conditions in life. At this period of life, 1920, the planets are slow and sluggish, and it would be well to keep as quiet as possible. The Sun has just left a powerful conjunction of the Moon, which probably caused a decided change in the life of this native about a year or so ago, which brought good and caused her to develop an ability to rely upon herself. In about four years a powerful influence of good will enter her life. It will bring money and success, accompanied by a little nervous disturbance, quite natural when so much is going on.

G. E. S.—Born August 8, 1896, at exactly eight minutes after 8 p. m. Detroit, Mich.—This is another full, interesting chart. The watery sign Pisces was on the eastern horizon at this moment of birth, which shows this gentleman to be of rather a restless, anxious, impressionable, and mediumistic disposition. He certainly will have many dual experiences and often feel torn between two different emotions. He will be kind-hearted and emotional, rarely understanding himself or his actions. He is inclined to be secretive in many ways. The mental atmosphere around him has much to do with his actions. Although both the Sun and the Moon are in Leo, the sign of rulership, they are found in the sixth house, signifying service. This young man will do best under a manager in any business in which he may be employed. He is very susceptible in affairs of the heart, although possessing a positive and determined nature.

Mercury and Venus are in conjunction, well aspected by Neptune, auguring talent or genius along some line of art, but Uranus, being very strong, also throws many sudden, unlooked-for obstacles in the way. He is often erratic and given to acting too much on impulse. Any occupation connected in any way with foodstuffs or grain, drugs or medicine, or the dispensing of such will

bring him money which will help to develop the artistic, æsthetic side of his nature. The Sun, in conjunction with the Moon and Jupiter, will bring him before the public in a most fortunate way later in life. There may be somewhat of a "skeleton in the closet" in connection with his home, or he may advance in the world to a higher place than do his near relatives. In his twenty-fourth year the Sun comes into evil aspect with Mars. This is a critical period in his career and necessitates the exercise of great care, for this aspect will surely bring a sharp, inflamed state of mind. He should guard against a lively quarrel or an accident which might impair his health for some time. When he is twenty-six, however, he comes under a wonderful influence which ought to lift him high in life.

J. L.—Born November 16, 1898, at 8 p. m., Ottawa, Canada.—Although this young lady has the Sun poised in Scorpio, I find she has four of the nine heavenly planets in the celestial sign Sagittarius. She has Cancer on the eastern horizon, denoting a tenacious, fanciful, receptive disposition. Much will depend upon her family with regard to her progress in life. She is inclined to be timid and sometimes oversensitive, but the help which comes from having so many planets in Sagittarius may correct this, as life advances. Any position, knowledge, or honor she does gain is held with great tenacity. She should note her dreams and expect some psychic experience. She should cultivate diplomacy in her speech, because there is a tendency to become a little abrupt or rebellious. Quarrels with friends may occur and she may lose many a good friend on account of being too outspoken. Mars brings her money, but it goes as surely as it comes. The Sun and Jupiter are in the fourth house. No matter what struggles she may have in life, this house denotes the end, and it is a most fortunate termination.

If her birth hour is exactly correct, she may have some trouble with her health and some blood disorder or rheumatism. She will have more than one love affair of a romantic type, which may cause her much worry, distress, and disappointment. The chart is not strong for marriage, but if she does marry, the man will be good looking, of a jovial, even disposition, but may be older or have some deformity. Around the age of twenty the Sun came into conjunction with Saturn; this was an epoch in her life, and I dare say it did not pass without affecting her so much that she remembers it. The year she is twenty-two, however, brings one of the best periods in her life for good.



The Man Who Found Himself

A DELIGHTFUL AND UNUSUAL TWO-PART STORY

By Margaret and H. de Vere Stacpoole

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

WHAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.

If Ponce de Leon had actually discovered the fountain of perpetual youth, he might have come to regret it. When, by a curious mental affliction—Lethmann's disease—Simon Pettigrew, erstwhile dignified lawyer, suddenly became young again and took up his youthful career where he had left it, his friends and relatives heartily wished he hadn't. It took the spring of the year to kindle the "young man's fancy." Two successive years, in May, he withdrew a huge sum from his bank, and, decking himself out in sporty clothes, quit London and his business affairs and embarked on a gay career of youthful indiscretions. His nephew, Bobby Ravenshaw, an aspiring author, whom he had cut off because of his wild life, is, strangely, the one whom Fate picks for Simon's rescuer. Aided by Simon's distracted man, Mudd, Bobby has instituted a search for the missing relative. He meets him in a public barroom, in a hilarious and spending mood. Simon, during his short aberration, has already fallen victim to the wiles of woman in the person of Cerise Rossignol. Bobby, himself unwillingly attached, by a lightly made promise, to Julia Delyse, is determined to keep watch over his errant uncle and save him from himself. His friend Tozer, who has Bobby's literary career at heart, encourages him in his virtuous undertaking.

PART II.

CHAPTER IX.

UNCLE SIMON awoke, consumed by thirst, but without a headache. A good constitution and years of regular life had given him a large balance to draw upon.

Mudd was in the room arranging things; he had just drawn up the blind.

"Who's that?" asked Simon.

"Mudd," replied the other.

Mudd's *tout ensemble* as a new sort of hotel servant seemed to please Simon, and he accepted him at once as he accepted everything that pleased him.

"Give me that water bottle," said Simon.

Mudd gave it. Simon half drained it and handed it back. The draft seemed to act on him like the elixir vitae.

"What are you doing with those clothes?" said he.

"Oh, just folding them," said Mudd.

"Well, just leave them alone," replied the other. "Is there any money in the pockets?"

"These aren't what you wore last night," said Mudd. "There was two pounds ten in the pockets of what you had on. Here it is on the mantel."

"Good," said Simon.

"Have you any more money anywhere about?" asked Mudd.

Now, Simon, spendthrift in front of pleasure and heedless of money as the wind, in front of Mudd seemed cautious and a bit suspicious. It was as if his subliminal mind recognized in Mudd restraint and guardianship and common sense.

"Not a halfpenny," said he. "Give me that two pounds ten."

Mudd, alarmed at the vigor of the other, put the money on the little table by the bed.

Simon was at once placated.

"Now put me out some clothes," said he. He seemed to have accepted Mudd now as a personal servant. Hired when? Heaven knows when—details like that were nothing to Simon.

Mudd, marveling and sorrowing, put out a suit of blue serge, a blue tie, a shirt, and other things of silk. There was a bath off the bedroom and, the things put out, Simon arose and wandered into the bathroom, and Mudd, taking his seat on a chair, listened to him tubbing and splashing—whistling, too, evidently in the gayest spirits, spirits portending another perfect day.

"Lead him," had said Oppenshaw. Why, Mudd already was being led. There was something about Simon, despite his irresponsibility and good humor, that would not brook a halter even if the halter were of silk. Mudd recognized that. And the money! What had become of the money? The locked portmanteau might contain it, but where was the key?

Mudd did not even know whether his unhappy master had recognized him or not and he dared not ask, fearing complications. But he knew that Simon had accepted him as a servant and that knowledge had to suffice. If Simon had refused him and turned him out, that would have been a tragedy indeed.

Simon, reëntering the bedroom, bath towel in hand, began to dress, Mudd handing him things which he took as

if half oblivious of the presence of the other. He seemed engaged in some happy vein of thought.

Dressed and smart, but unshaved, though scarcely showing the fact, Simon took the two pounds ten and put it into his pocket; then he looked at Mudd. His expression had changed somewhat. He seemed working out some problem in his mind.

"That will do," said he. "I won't want you any more for a few minutes. I want to arrange things. You can go down and come back in a few minutes."

Mudd hesitated. Then he went. He heard Simon lock the door. He went into an adjoining corridor and walked up and down, confused, agitated, wondering, dumbly praying that Mr. Robert would come. Suppose Simon wanted to be alone to cut his throat! The horror of this thought was dispelled by the recollection that there were no razors about; also, by the remembered cheerfulness of the other. But why did he want to be alone?

Two minutes passed, three, five; then the intrigued one, making for the closed door, turned the handle. The door was unlocked and Simon, standing in the middle of the room, was himself again.

"I've got a message I want you to take," said Simon.

Ten minutes later, Mr. Robert Ravenshaw, entering the Charing Cross Hotel, found Mudd with his hat on, waiting for him.

"Thank the Lord you've come, Mr. Robert," said Mudd.

"What's the matter now?" asked Bobby. "Where is he?"

"He's having breakfast," said Mudd.

"Well, that's sensible, anyhow. Cheer up, Mudd. Why, you look as if you'd swallowed a funeral!"

"It's the money," said Mudd. Then he burst out, "He told me to go from the room and come back in a minute. Out I went, and he locked the door."

Back I came, there was he standing. 'Mudd,' said he, 'I've got a message for you to take. I want you to take a bunch of flowers to a lady.' Me!"

"Yes," said Bobby.

"To a lady! 'Where's the flowers?,' said I, wishing to head him off. 'You're to go and buy them,' said he. 'I have no money,' said I. 'Hang money,' said he, and he puts his hand in his pocket and out he brings a hundred-pound note and a ten-pound note. And he had only two pounds ten when I left him. He's got the money in that portmanteau, that I'm sure, and he got me out of the room to get it."

"Evidently," said Bobby.

"'Here's ten pounds,' said he. 'Get the best bunch of flowers money can buy, and tell the lady I'm coming to see her later on in the day.' 'What lady?' said I, wishing to head him off. 'This is the address,' said he, and goes to the writing table and writes it out."

He handed Bobby a sheet of the hotel paper. Simon's handwriting was on it, and a name and address supplied by that memory of his which clung so tenaciously to all things pleasant.

Miss Rossignol, 10 Duke Street, Leicester Square.

Bobby whistled.

"Did I ever dream I'd see this day?" mourned Mudd. "Me, sent on a message like that, by *him*!"

"This is a complication," said Bobby.

"I say, Mudd, he must have been busy yesterday—upon my soul!"

"Question is, what am I to do?" said Mudd. "I'm goin' to take no flowers to hussies."

Bobby thought deeply for a moment.

"Did he recognize you this morning?" he asked.

"I don't know," said Mudd, "but he made no bones. I don't believe he remembered me right, but he made no bones."

"Well, Mudd, you'd better just swal-

low your feelings and take those flowers, for if you don't, and he finds out, he may fire you. Where would we be then? Besides, he's to be humored, so the doctor said, didn't he?"

"Shall I send for the doctor right off, sir?" asked Mudd, clutching at a forlorn hope.

"The doctor can't stop him from fooling after girls," said Bobby, "unless the doctor could put him away in a lunatic asylum, and he can't. Seeing he says he's not mad. Besides, there's the slur, and the thing would be sure to leak out. No, Mudd, just swallow your feelings and trot off and get those flowers and, meanwhile, I'll do what I can to divert his mind. And see here, Mudd, you might just see what that girl is like."

"Shall I tell her he's off his head, and that maybe she'll have the law on her if she goes on fooling with him?" suggested Mudd.

"No," said the more worldly-wise Bobby. "If she's the wrong sort, that would only make her more keen. She'd say to herself: 'Here's a queer old chap with money, half off his nut, and not under restraint. Let's make hay before they lock him up.' If she's the right sort, it doesn't matter, he's safe. And, right sort or wrong sort, if he found you'd been interfering, he might send you about your business. No, Mudd, there's nothing to be done but get the flowers and leave them, and see the lady if possible, and make notes about her. Say as little as possible."

"He told me to tell her he'd call later in the day."

"Leave that to me," said Bobby. "And now off with you."

Mudd departed and Bobby made for the coffee room.

He entered and looked around. A good many people were breakfasting in the big room, the ordinary English breakfast crowd at a big hotel—family parties, lone men and lone women,



Simon's eyes were constantly traveling in a given direction. November was glancing at May.

some reading letters, some papers, and all, somehow, with an air of divorce-ment from home.

Simon was there, seated at a little table on the right and enjoying himself. Now, and in his right mind, Simon gave Bobby another shock. Could it be possible that this pleasant-faced, jovial-looking gentleman, so well dressed and à la mode, was uncle Simon? What an improvement! So it seemed at first glance.

Simon looked up from his sausages, saw Bobby and, with his unfailing memory of pleasant things, even dimly seen, recognized him as the man of last night.

"Hullo," said Simon, as the other came up to the table. "There you are again. Had breakfast?"

"No," said Bobby. "I'll sit here if I may." He drew a chair to the second place that was laid and took his seat.

"Have sausages," said Simon. "Nothing beats sausages."

Bobby ordered sausages. Though he would have preferred anything else, he didn't want to argue.

"Nothing beats sausages," said uncle Simon again.

Bobby concurred.

Then the conversation languished, just as it may between two old friends or boon companions who have no need to keep up talk.

"Feeling all right this morning?" ventured Bobby.

"Never felt better in my life," replied the other. "Never felt better in my life. How did you manage to get home?"

"Oh, I got home all right."

Simon scarcely seemed to hear this comforting declaration. Scrambled eggs had been placed before him.

Bobby, in sudden contemplation of a month of this business, almost forgot his sausages. The true horror of uncle Simon appeared to him now for the first time. You see, he knew all the facts of the case. An ordinary person,

unknowing, would have accepted Simon as all right, but it seemed to Bobby, now, that it would have been much better if his companion had been decently and honestly mad, less uncanny. He was obviously sane, though a bit divorced from things, obviously sane and eating scrambled eggs after sausages with the abandon of a schoolboy on a holiday after a long term at a cheap school—sane and enjoying himself after a night like that—yet he was Simon Pettigrew.

Then he noticed that Simon's eyes were constantly traveling, despite the scrambled eggs, in a given direction. A pretty young girl was breakfasting with a family party a little way off, and it was that direction that his took.

There was a mother, a father, something that looked like an uncle, what appeared to be an aunt, and what appeared to be May dressed in a silk blouse and plain skirt.

November was glancing at May.

Bobby remembered Miss Rossignol and felt a bit comforted, then he began to feel uncomfortable. The aunt was looking fixedly at Simon. His admiration had evidently been noted by watchfulness. Then the uncle seemed to take notice.

Bobby, blushing, tried to make conversation and only got replies. Then, to his relief, the family, having finished breakfast, withdrew, and Simon became himself again; cheerful and burning for the pleasures of the day before him, the pleasures to be got from London, money, and youth.

His conversation told this, and that he desired to include Bobby in the scheme of things. The young man could not help remembering Thackeray's little story of how, coming up to London, he met a young Oxford man in the railway carriage, a young man half tipsy with the prospect of a day in town and a "tear round"—with the prospect, nothing more.

"What are you going to do now?" asked Bobby, as the other rose from the table.

"Shaved," said Simon. "Come along and get shaved. Can't go about like this."

Bobby was already shaved, but he followed the other outside to a barber's and sat reading a *Daily Mirror* and waiting while Simon was operated on. The latter, having been shaved, had his hair brushed and trimmed and all the time during these processes the barber spake in this wise, Simon turning the monologue to a duologue:

"Yes, sir, glorious weather, isn't it? London's pretty full, too, for the time of year—fuller than I've seen for a long time. Ever tried face massage, sir? Most comforting. Can be applied by yourself. Can sell you a complete outfit, Parker's face cream and all, two pound ten. Thank you, sir. Staying in the Charing Cross 'Otel! I'll have it sent to your room. Yes, sir, the 'otel is full, and there's a deal of money being spent in London, sir. Raise your chin, sir, a little more. Ever try a Gillette razor, sir? Useful should you wish to shave in a 'urry. Beautiful plated—this is it, sir. One guinea, Shines like silver, don't it? Thank you, sir, I'll send it up with the other. Yes, sir, it's most convenient havin' a barber's close to the 'otel. I supply most of the 'otel people with toilet rekisites. 'Air's a little thin on the top, sir. Didn't mean no offense, sir. Maybe it's the light—dry, that's what it is, it's the 'ot weather. Now I'd recommend Coolers' Lotion, followed after application by Goulard's Brilliantine. Oh, Lord! No, sir, *them* brilliantines is no use. Goulard's is the only real; costs a bit more, but them cheap brilliantines is—thank you, sir—and how are you off for 'air brushes, sir. There's a pair of bargains in that show case—traveler's samples. I can let you have, silver plated, as good as you'll get in London and 'arf

the price. Shine, don't they? And feel the bristles—real 'og. Thank you, sir. Two ten—one, one—one four—ten six six—and a shillin' for the 'air cut and shave, six five, six. No, sir, I can't change an 'undred-pound note. A ten—yes, I can manage a ten. Thank you, sir."

Six pounds five and sixpence for a hair cut and shave—with accompaniments! Bobby, tongue-tied and aghast, rose up.

"'Air cut, sir?" asked the barber.

"No, thanks," replied Bobby.

Simon, having glanced at himself in the mirror, picked up his straw hat and walking stick and, taking the arm of his companion, out they walked.

"Where are you going?" asked Bobby.

"Anywhere," replied the other. "I want to get some change."

"Why, you've got change!"

Simon unlinked and in the face of the Strand and the passers-by produced from his pocket two hundred-pound notes, three or four one-pound notes, and a ten-pound note. Searching in his pockets to see what gold he had, he dropped a hundred-pound note, which Bobby quickly recovered.

"Mind!" said Bobby. "You'll have those notes snatched."

"That's all right," said Simon.

He replaced the money in his pocket and his companion breathed again.

Bobby had borrowed five pounds from Tozer, in view of possibilities.

"Look here!" said he. "What's the good of staying in London a glorious day like this? Let's go somewhere quiet and enjoy ourselves—Richmond or Greenwich or somewhere. I'll pay expenses and you need not bother about change."

"No, you won't," said Simon. "You're going to have some fun along with me. What's the matter with London?"

Bobby couldn't say.

Renouncing the idea of the country, without any other idea to replace it except to keep his companion walking and away from shops and bars and girls, he let himself be led. They were making back toward Charing Cross. At the Bureau de Change Simon went in, the idea of changing a hundred-pound note pursuing him. He wanted elbowroom for enjoyment, but the bureau refused to make change. The note was all right; perhaps it was Simon that was the doubtful quantity. He had quite a little quarrel over the matter and came out, arm in arm with his companion, flushed.

"Come along," said Bobby, a new idea striking him. "We'll get change somewhere."

From Charing Cross, through Cockspur Street, then through Pall Mall and up St. James' Street they went, stopping at every likely and unlikely place to find change. Engaged so, Simon, at least, was not spending money or taking refreshment. They tried at shipping offices, at insurance offices, at gun shops, and tailors, till the weary Bobby began to loathe the business, began to feel that both he and his companion were under suspicion, and almost that the business they were on was doubtful.

Simon, however, seemed to pursue it with zest and, now, without anger. It seemed to Bobby as if he enjoyed being refused, as it gave him another chance of entering another shop and showing that he had a hundred-pound note to change—a horrible, foolish satisfaction that put a new edge to the affairs. Simon was swanking.

"Look here," said the unfortunate at last. "Wasn't there a girl you told me of last night you wanted to send flowers to? Let's go and get them; then we can have a drink somewhere."

"She'll wait," said Simon. "Besides, I've sent them. Come on."

"Very well," said Bobby in desper-

ation. "I believe I know a place where you can get your note changed. It's close by."

They reached a cigar merchant's. It was the cigar merchant and money lender that had often stood him in good stead.

"Wait for me," said Bobby, and he went in.

Behind the counter was a gentleman recalling Prince Florizel of Bohemia.

"Good morning, Mr. Ravenshaw," said this individual.

"Good morning, Alvarez," replied Bobby. "I haven't called about that little account I owe you—but cheer up, I've got you a new customer. He wants a note changed."

"What sort of note?" asked Alvarez.

"A hundred-pound note. Can you do it?"

"If the note's all right."

"Lord bless me, yes. I can vouch for that and for him, only he's strange to London. He's got heaps of money, too, but you must promise not to rook him too much over cigars for he's a relative of mine."

"Where is he?" asked Alvarez.

"Outside."

"Well, bring him in."

Bobby went out. Uncle Simon was gone—gone as though he had never been; swallowed up in the passing crowd; fascinated away by Heaven knows what, and with all those bank notes in his pocket. He might have got into a taxi or boarded an omnibus or vanished up Sackville Street or Albemarle Street. Any passing fancy or sudden temptation would have been sufficient to start him off.

Bobby, hurrying toward St. James' Street to have a look down it, stopped a policeman.

"Have you seen an old gentleman—I mean a youngish-looking gentleman in a straw hat?" asked Bobby. "I've lost him."

Scarcely waiting for the inevitable reply, he hurried on, feeling that the constable must have thought him mad.

St. James' Street showed nothing of Simon. He was turning back when, half blind to everything but the object of his search, he almost ran into the arms of Julia Delyse. She was carrying a parcel that looked like a manuscript.

"Why, Bobby, what is the matter with you?" asked Julia.

"I'm looking for some one," said Bobby distractedly. "I've lost—a relative of mine."

"I wish it were one of mine," said Julia. "What sort of relative?"

"An oldish man in a straw hat. Walk down a bit. You look that side of the street and I'll watch this. He may have gone into a shop—and I must get hold of him."

He walked rapidly on and Julia, sucked for a moment, into this whirlpool of an uncle Simon that had already engulfed Mudd, Bobby, and the good name of the firm of Pettigrew, toiled beside him till they came nearly to the park railings.

"He's gone," said Bobby, stopping suddenly dead. "It's no use, he's gone."

"Well, you'll find him again," said Julia hopefully. "Relatives always turn up."

"Oh, he's sure to turn up," said the other, "and that's what I'm dreading. It's the way he'll turn up that's bothering me."

"I could understand you better if I knew what you meant," said Julia. "Let's walk back, this is out of my direction."

They turned.

Despite his perplexity and annoyance Bobby could not suppress a feeling of relief at having done with the business for a moment. All the same he was really distressed. The craving for counsel and companionship in thought seized him.

"Julia, can you keep a secret?" asked he.

"Tight," said Julia.

"Well, it's my uncle."

"You've lost?"

"Yes, and he's got his pockets full of hundred-pound bank notes—and he's no more fit to be trusted with them than a child."

"What a delightful uncle!"

"Don't laugh—it's serious."

"He's not mad, is he?"

"No, that's the worst of it—he's got one of these beastly new diseases. I don't know what it is, but as far as I can make out, it's as if he'd got young again without remembering what he is."

"How interesting!"

"Yes, you would find him very interesting if you had anything to do with him. But, seriously, something has to be done. There's the family name and there's his business."

He explained the case of Simon as well as he could. Julia did not seem in the least shocked.

"But I think it's beautiful," she broke out. "Strange, but in a way beautiful and pathetic. Oh, if *only* a few people more could do the same—become young, do foolish things instead of this eternal grind of common sense, hard business, and everything that ruins the world."

Bobby tried to imagine the world with an increased population of the brand of uncle Simon and failed.

"I know," he said, "but it will be the ruin of his business and reputation. Abstractedly I don't deny there's something to be said for it, but in the concrete it doesn't work. Do think and let's try to find a way out."

"I'm thinking," said Julia. Then, after a pause, "You must get him away from London."

"That was my idea, but he won't go, not even to Richmond for a few hours. He won't leave London."

"There's a place in Wessex I know," said Julia, "where there's a charming

little hotel. I was down there for a week in May. You might take him there."

"We'd never get him into the train."

"Take him in a car."

"Might do that," said Bobby. "What's the name of it?"

"Upton-on-Hill, and I'll tell you what. I'll go down with you if you like, and help to watch him. I'd like to study him."

"I'll think of it," said Bobby hurriedly. The affairs of uncle Simon were taking a new turn. Like Fate they were trying to force him into closer contact with Julia. Craving for some one to help him to think, he had welded himself to Julia with this family secret for solder. The idea of a little hotel in the country with Julia, ever ready for embraces and passionate scenes; the knowledge that he was almost half engaged to her; the instinct that she would suck him into cozy corners and arbors—all this frankly frightened him. He was beginning to recognize that Julia was quite light and almost brilliant in the street when love making was impossible, but impossibly heavy and dull, though mesmeric, when alone with him with her head on his shoulder; and away in the distance of his mind a deformed sort of common sense was telling him that if once Julia got a good long clutch on him, she would marry him and he would pass from whirlpool to whirlpool of cozy corner and arbor, over the rapids of marriage, with Julia clinging to him.

"I'll think of it," said he. "What's its name?"

"The Rose Hotel, Upton-on-Hill—think of Upton Sinclair. It's a jolly little place and such a nice landlord. We'd have a jolly time, Bobby! Bobby, have you forgotten yesterday?"

"No," said Bobby from his heart.

"I didn't sleep a wink last night," said the lady of the red hair, "did you?"

*Scarcely."

"Do you know," said she, "this is almost like fate? It gives us a chance to meet under the same roof quite properly since your uncle is there. Not that I care a button for the world, but still there are the proprieties, aren't there?"

"There are."

"Wait for me," said she. "I want to go into my publisher's with this manuscript."

They had reached a fashionable publishers' office that had the appearance of a bank. In she went, returning in a moment empty-handed.

"Now I'm free," said she, "free for a month. What are you doing to-day?"

"I'll be looking for uncle Simon," he replied. "I must rush back to the Charing Cross Hotel, and after that I must go on hunting. I'll see you to-morrow, Julia."

"Are you staying at the Charing Cross?"

"No, I'm staying at the Albany with a man called Tozer."

"I wish we could have had the day together—well, to-morrow, then."

"To-morrow," said Bobby.

He put her into a taxi and she gave the address of a female literary club. Then, when the taxi had driven away, he returned to the Charing Cross Hotel. There he found Mudd, who had just returned.

CHAPTER X.

Mudd, with the ten-pound note and the written address, had started that morning with the intention of doing another errand as well. He first took a cab to King Charles Street. It was a relief to find it there and that the house had not been burned down in the night. Fire was one of Mudd's haunting dreads—fire and the fear of a mistress. He had extinguishing bombs hung in every passage, besides red, cone-shaped extinguishers. If he could have

had bombs to put out the flames of love and keep women away, he no doubt would have had them.

Mrs. Jukes received him and he inquired if the plate had been locked up. He visited his own room and examined his bank book to see if it were safe and untampered with. Then he had a glass of ginger wine for his stomach's sake.

"Where are you off to now?" asked Mrs. Jukes.

"On business for the master," replied Mudd. "I've some law papers to take to an address. Lord! Look at those brasses! Haven't the girls no hands? Place going to wrack and ruin if I leave it two instant minutes—and look at that fender. Sure you put the chain on the hall door last night?"

"Sure."

"Well, be sure you do it, for there's another Jack the Ripper chap goin' about the West End, I've heard, and he may be in on you if you don't."

Having frightened Mrs. Jukes into the sense of the necessity for chains as well as bolts, Mudd put on his hat, blew his nose, and departed, banging the door behind him and making sure it was shut.

There is a flower shop in the street at the end of King Charles Street. He entered, bought his bouquet, and with it in his hand left the establishment. He was looking for a cab to hide himself in. He found none, but he met a fellow butler, Judge Ponsonby's man.

"Hello, Mr. Mudd," said the other. "Going courting?"

"Mrs. Jukes asked me to take them to a female friend that's goin' to be married," said Mudd.

The bouquet was not extraordinarily large, but it seemed to grow larger. Condemned to take an omnibus in lieu of a cab, it seemed to fill the omnibus. People look at it and then at Mudd. It seemed to him that he was condemned to carry Simon's folly bare in the face of the world. Then he remem-

bered what he had said about the recipient going to be married. Was that an omen?

Mudd believed in omens. If his elbow itched, and it had itched yesterday, he was going to sleep in a strange bed. He never killed spiders, and he tested "strangers" in the teacup to see if they were male or female.

The omen was riding him now and he got out of the omnibus and sought the street of his destination, feeling almost as if he were a fantastic bridesmaid at some nightmare wedding, with Simon in the rôle of groom.

That Simon should select a wife in this gloomy street off Leicester Square and in this drab-looking house at whose door he was knocking, did not occur to Mudd. What did occur to him was that some hussy living in this house had put her spell on Simon and might select him for a husband, marry him at a registry office before his temporary youth had departed, and come and reign at King Charles Street.

Mudd's dreaded imaginary mistress had always figured in his mind's eyes as a stout lady—eminently a lady—who would interfere with his ideas of how the brasses ought to be polished, interfere with tradesmen, order Mudd about, and make herself generally a nuisance; this new imaginary horror was a "painted slut," who would bring ridicule and disgrace on Simon and all belonging to him.

Mudd had the fine feelings of an old maid on matters like this, backed by a fine knowledge of what elderly men are capable of in the way of folly with women. Did not Mr. Justice Thurlow marry his cook?

He rang at the dingy hall door and it was opened by a dingy little girl in a print dress.

"Does Miss 'Rosinol' live here?" asked Mudd.

"Yus."

"Can I see her?"

"Wait a minit," said the dingy one. She clattered up the stairs. She wore hobnail boots to judge by the noise. A minute elapsed and then she clattered down again.

"Come in, plaze," said the little girl.

Mudd obeyed and followed upstairs, holding on to the shaky banister with his left hand, carrying the bouquet in his right, feeling as though he were a vicious man walking upstairs in a dream, feeling no longer like Mudd.

The little girl opened a door and there was the "painted hussy," old Madame Rossignol, sitting at a table, with books spread open before her, and writing.

She translated—as before said—English books into French, novels mostly.

The bouquet of last night had been divided; there were flowers about the room, and about the room, despite its shabbiness, there was an atmosphere of cleanliness and high decency that soothed the stricken soul of Mudd.

"I'm Mr. Pettigrew's man," said Mudd "and he asked me to bring you these flowers."

"Ah, Monsieur Seemon Pattigrew!" cried the old lady, her face lighting. "Come in, monsieur. Cerise, Cerise! A gentleman from Mr. Pattigrew! Will you not take a seat, monsieur?"

Mudd, handing over the flowers, sat down, and at that moment in came Cerise from the bedroom adjoining, fresh and dainty, with wide blue eyes that took in Mudd and the flowers, that seemed to take in at the same time the whole of spring and summer.

"Poor, but decent," said Mudd to himself.

"Monsieur," said the old lady, as Cerise ran off to get a bowl to put the flowers in, "you are as welcome to us as your good kind master who saved my daughter yesterday. Will you convey to him our deepest respects and our thanks?"

"Saved her?" said Mudd.



The bouquet was not extraordinarily large, but it seemed to grow larger and to fill the omnibus.

Madame explained. Cerise, arranging the flowers, joined in. They waxed enthusiastic. Never had Mudd been so chattered to before. He saw the whole business and guessed how the land lay now. He felt deeply relieved. Madame inspired him with instinctive confidence; Cerise in her youth and innocence repelled any idea of marriage between herself and Simon; but they'd got to be warned, somehow, that Simon was off the spot. He began the warning, seated there before the women and rubbing his knees gently, his eyes wandering about as if seeking inspiration from the furniture.

Mr. Pettigrew was a very good master, but he had to be taken care of, for his health wasn't what it might be. He was older than he looked, but lately he had had an illness that had made him suddenly grow young again as you might say. The doctors could not make

it out, but he was just like a child sometimes, as you might say.

"I said it," cut in madame. "A boy—that is his charm."

Well, Mudd did not know anything about charms, but he was often very anxious about Mr. Pettigrew. Then, little by little, the confidence the women inspired opened his floodgates and his suppressed emotions came out.

London was not good for Mr. Pettigrew's health, that was the truth. He ought to be got away quiet and out of excitement—door knockers rose up before him as he said this—but he was very self-willed. It was strange, a gentleman getting young again like this, and a great perplexity and trouble to an old man like him, Mudd.

"Ah, monsieur, he has been always young," said madame. "That heart could never grow old!"

• Mudd shook his head.

"I've known him for forty years," said he, "and it has hit me cruel hard, his doing things he's never done before—not much—but there you are—he's different."

"I have known an old gentleman," said madame, "Monsieur de Mirabole. He, too, changed to be quite gay and young as if spring had come to him. He wrote me verses," laughed madame. "Me, an old woman. I humored him, did I not, Cerise? But I never read his verses. I could not humor him to that point."

"What happened to him?" asked Mudd gloomily.

"Oh, dear, he fell in love with Cerise," said madame. "He was very rich. He wanted to marry Cerise, did he not, Cerise?"

"*Oui, maman,*" replied Cerise, finishing the flowers.

All this hit Mudd pleasantly. Sincere as sunshine, patently, obviously truthful, this pair of females were beyond suspicion on the charge of setting nets for Simon; also, and for the first time in his life, he came to know the comfort of a female mind when in trouble. His troubles up to this had been mostly about uncleaned brasses, corked wine, letters forgotten to be posted. In this whirlpool of amazement, like Poe's man in the descent of the maelstrom, who, clinging to a barrel, found that he was being sucked down slower, Mudd, clinging now to the female saving-something sense, clarity of outlook, goodness—call it what you will—found comfort.

He had opened his mind. The nightmare had lifted somewhat. Opening his mind to Bobby had not relieved him in the least. On the contrary, talking with Bobby, the situation had seemed more insane than ever. The two rigid, masculine minds had followed one another, incapable of mutual help; the buoyant female, something incapable of strict definition, was now to Mudd as

the supporting barrel. He clutched at the idea of old Monsieur de Mirabole, who had got young again without coming to much mischief. He felt that Simon, on falling upon these two females, had fallen among pillows. He told them of Simon's message, that he would call upon them later in the day, and they laughed.

"He will be safe with us," said madame. "We will not let him come to 'arm. Do not be alarmed, Monsieur Mod, the *bon dieu* will surely protect an innocent so charming, so good. So much goodness may walk alone, even among tigers, even among lions, and it will come to no 'arm. We will see that he returns to the Sharing Cross 'Otel. I will talk to 'im."

Mudd departed, relieved, so great is the power of goodness, even though it shines in the persons of an impoverished old French lady and a girl whose innocence is her only strength.

But his relief was not to be of long duration, for on entering the hotel, as before said, he met Bobby.

"He's gone," said Bobby. "Given me the slip. And he has two hundred-pound bank notes with him, to say nothing of the rest."

"Oh, Lord!" said Mudd.

"Can he have gone to see that girl—what's her address?"

"What girl?" asked Mudd.

"The girl you took the flowers to."

"I've just been," said Mudd. "No, he wasn't there. Wish he was, it's an old lady."

"Old lady!"

"And her daughter. They're French folk, poor, but honest. Not a scrap of harm in them." He explained the Ros-signal affair.

"Well, there's nothing to be done but sit down and wait," said Bobby.

"It's easy to say that. Me, with my nerves near gone!"

"I know, mine are nearly as bad. 'Pon my soul, it's just as if one had lost

a child. Mudd, we've got to get him out of London. We've got to do it!"

"Get him back first," said Mudd. "Get him back alive with all that money in his pocket. He'll be murdered before night, that's my opinion—I know London—or jailed—and he'll give his right name."

"We'll tip the reporters if he is," said Bobby, "and keep it out of the papers. I was run in once and I know the ropes. Cheer up, Mudd, and go and have a whisky and soda. You want bucking up and so do I."

"Bucking up!" said Mudd.

CHAPTER XI.

One of the pleasantest, yet perhaps most dangerous, points about Simon Pettigrew's condition was his un-English open-heartedness toward strangers—strangers who pleased him; a disposition, in fact, to chum with anything that pleased him, without question, without thought. Affable strangers, pretty girls—it was all the same to Simon.

Now when Bobby Ravenshaw went into the cigar merchant's, leaving Simon outside, he had not noticed particularly a large Rolls-Royce car, claret-colored and adorned with a tiny monogram on the door panel. It was standing in front of the shop immediately on the right. It was the property of the Honorable Dick Pugeot, and just as Bobby disappeared into the tobacconist's, the Honorable Dick appeared from the doorstep of the next-door shop.

Dick Pugeot, late of the Guards, was a big, yellow man, quite young, perhaps not more than twenty-five, yet with a serious and fatherly face and an air that gave him another five years of apparent age. This serious and fatherly appearance was deceptive. With the activity of a gnat, a disregard of all consequences, a big fortune, a good heart, and a taste for fun of any sort as long as it kept him moving, Dick Pugeot

was generally in trouble of some kind or another. His craving for speed on the road was only equal to his instinct for fastness in other respects, but, up to this, thanks to luck and his own personality, he had, with the exception of a few indorsed licenses and other trifles of that sort, always escaped.

But once he had come very near to a real disaster. Some eighteen months ago he found himself involved with a lady, a female shark in the guise of an angel, a—to put it in his own language—a "bad 'un." The "bad 'un" had him firmly hooked. She was a countess, too! And fried and eaten he undoubtedly would have been had not the wisdom of an uncle saved him.

"Go to my solicitor—Pettigrew," said the uncle. "If she were an ordinary card sharper I would advise you to go to Marcus Abraham, but, seeing what she is, Pettigrew is the man. He wouldn't take up an ordinary case of this sort, but, seeing what she is and considering that you are my nephew, he'll do it—and he knows all the ins and outs of her family. There's nothing he doesn't know about us." "Us" meaning people of high degree.

Pugeot went and Simon took up the case, and in forty-eight hours the fish was off the hook, frantically grateful. He presented Simon with a silver wine cooler and then forgot him, till this moment, when, coming out of Spud & Simpson's shop, he saw Simon standing on the pavement smoking a cigar and watching the pageant of the street.

Simon's new clothes and holiday air and straw hat put him off for a moment, but it was Pettigrew right enough.

"Hello, Pettigrew!" said Pugeot.

"Hello," said Simon, pleased with the heartiness and appearance of this new friend.

"Why, you look quite gay!" said Pugeot. "What are you up to?"

"Out for some fun," said Simon. "What are you up to?"

"Same as you," replied Pugeot, delighted, amused, and surprised at Simon's manner and reply, the vast respect he had for his astuteness greatly amplified by this evidence of mundane leanings. "Get into the car, I've got to call at Pantom Street for a moment and then we'll go and have luncheon or something."

He opened the car door and Simon hopped in. Then he gave the address to the driver and the car drove off.

"Well, I never expected to see you this morning," said Pugeot. "Never can feel grateful enough to you, either. You've nothing special to do, have you? Anywhere I can drive you to?"

"I've got to see a girl," said Simon "but she can wait."

Pugeot laughed.

That explained the summer garb and straw hat, but the frankness came to him with the weest bit of a shock. However, he was used to shocks, and if old Simon Pettigrew was running after girls, it was no affair of his. It was a good joke, though, despite the fact that he could never tell it. Pugeot was not the man to tell tales out of school.

"Look here," said Simon, suddenly producing his notes. "I want to change a hundred. Been trying to do it in a lot of shops. You can't have any fun without some money."

"Don't you worry," said Pugeot. "This is my show."

"I want to change a hundred," said Simon with the persistency of Toddy wanting to see the wheels go round.

"Well, I'll get you change, though you don't really want it. Why, you've got two hundred there—and a tenner."

"It's not too much to have a good time with."

"Oh, my," said Pugeot. "Well, if you're on the razzle dazzle, I'm with you, Pettigrew. I feel safe with you, in a way. There's not much you don't know."

"Not much," said Simon.

The car stopped.

"A minute," said Pugeot. Out he jumped, transacted his business, and was back again within five minutes. There was a new light in his sober eye.

"Let's go and have a slap at the Wilderness," said he, lowering his voice a tone. "You know the Wilderness. I can get you in. Jolly good fun!"

"Right," said Simon.

Pugeot gave an address to the driver and off they went. They stopped in a narrow street and Pugeot led the way into a house.

In the hall of this house he had an interview with a pale-faced individual in black, an evil, weary-looking person who handed Simon a visitor's book to sign. Then they went in to a bar where Simon imbibed a cocktail, and from the bar they went upstairs.

Pugeot opened a door and disclosed Monte Carlo—a Monte Carlo shrunk to one room and one table. This was the Wilderness Club, and around the table were grouped men of all ages and sizes, some of them of the highest social standing.

The stakes were high. Just as a child gobbles a stolen apple so these gentlemen seemed to be trying to make as much out of their furtive business as they could, and get away, winners or losers, as soon as possible, lest worse befall them. Added to the uneasiness of the gambler was the uneasiness of the lawbreaker, the two uneasinesses combined making a mental cocktail that, to a large number of the frequenters, had a charm far above anything to be obtained in a legitimate gambling shop on the Continent.

This place supplied Oppenshaw with some of his male patients.

Pugeot played and lost and then Simon plunged. They were there an hour, and in that hour Simon won seven hundred pounds! Then Pugeot, far more delighted than he, dragged him away. It was now nearly one

o'clock, and downstairs they had lunch-on of a sort and a bottle of cliquot of a sort.

"You came in with two hundred and you are going out with nine," said Pugeot. "I am so jolly glad! You *have* the luck! When we've finished we'll go for a great, tearing spin and get the air. You'd better get a cap somewhere, that straw hat will be blown to Jericho. You've never seen Randall drive? He beats me. We'll run round to my rooms and get coats. The old car is a Dragon Fly. I want to show you what a Dragon Fly can really do on the hard, highroad, out of sight of traffic. Two Benedic-tines, please."

They stopped at Scott's, where Simon invested in a cap, and then they went to Pugeot's rooms, where over-coats were obtained. Then they started.

Pugeot was nicknamed the Baby—Baby Pugeot—and the name sometimes applied. Mixed with his passion for life, he loved fresh air and a good many innocent things, speed among them. Randall, the chauffeur, seemed on all fours with him in the latter respect, and the Dragon Fly was an able instrument. Clearing London, they made through Sussex for the sea. The day was perfect and filled for miles with the hum of the Dragon Fly. At times they were doing a good seventy miles, at times less, then came the Downs and a vision of the sea, seacoast towns through which they passed, picking up petrol and liquid refreshments. At Hastings, or somewhere, where they indulged in a light and early dinner, the vision of Cerise, always like a guardian angel, along with the memory of her address, arose before the remains of the mind of Simon. He wanted to go there at once, which was manifestly impossible. He tried to explain her to Pugeot, who at the same time was trying to explain a dark-eyed girl he had met at a dance the week before last, and who was haunting him.

"Can't get her blessed eyes out of my head, my dear chap, and she's engaged two deep to a chap in the Carabineers, without a cent to his name and a pile of debts as big as Mount Ararat. She won't be happy—that's what's gettin' me. She won't be happy. How *can* she be happy with a chap like that—without a cent to his name and a pile of debts. Lord! I can't understand women—they're beyond me. Waiter, confound you, do you call this stuff asparagus? Take it away. Not a cent to her name, and tied to him for years, maybe. I mean to say, it's absurd. What were you saying? Oh, yes, I'll take you there—it's only round the corner, so to speak. Randall will do it; the Dragon Fly'll have us there in no time. Do you remember, was this Hastings or Bognor? Waiter, hi—is this Hastings or Bognor? All your towns are so confoundedly alike there's no telling which is which, and I've been through twenty. Hastings, that'll do. Put your information down in the bill—if you can find room for it. You needn't be a bit alarmed, old chap, she'll be there all right. You said you sent her those flowers—well, that will keep her all right and happy. I mean to say, she'll be right—*absolutely*. I know women from hoof to mane. No, no pudding—bill, please."

They came out into the warm summer twilight and sat for a while, listening to a band. Getting into the car, Pugeot said to Simon:

"It's a jolly good thing we've got a teetotum driver—what do *you* say, old chap?"

Then the warm and purring night took them and sprinkled stars over them and a great moon rose behind which annoyed Pugeot, who kept looking back at it, abusing it because the reflection from the wind screen got in his eyes. Then they burst a tire and Pugeot, instantly becoming condensedly clever and active and clear

of speech, insisted on putting on the spare wheel himself. He had a long argument with Randall as to which was the front and which was the back of the wheel—not the sideways front and back, but the foreways front and back—Randall insisting gently that it did not matter. Then, the wheel on and all the nuts retasted by Randall, an operation which Pugeot took as a sort of personal insult, the jack was taken down and Pugeot threw it into a ditch. They would not want it again, as they had not another spare wheel, and it was a nuisance, anyhow; but Randall, with the good humor and patience which came to him from a salary equal to the salary of a country curate, free quarters and big tips and perquisites, recovered the jack and they started.

A town and an inn that absolutely refused to serve the smiling motorists with anything stronger than "minerals" was passed. Then, ten miles farther on, the lights of a town down on the horizon, brought the dry "insides" to a clear consideration of the position.

The town developing an inn, Randall was sent, as the dove from the ark, with a half sovereign and returned with a stone demijohn and two glasses. It was beer.

CHAPTER XII.

Bobby Ravenshaw did not spend the day at the Charing Cross Hotel waiting for Simon. He amused himself otherwise, leaving Mudd to do the waiting.

At eleven o'clock he called at the hotel. "Mr. Mudd" was upstairs in Mr. Pettigrew's room and would be called down.

Bobby thought that he could trace a lot of things in the porter's tone and manner, a respect and commiseration for Mr. Mudd, and perhaps not quite such a high respect for himself and Simon. He fancied that the hotel was

beginning to have its eye upon him and Simon as questionable parties of the *bon viveur* type, a fancy that may have been baseless, but was still there.

Then Mudd appeared.

"Well, Mudd," said Bobby, "hasn't he turned up yet?"

"No, Mr. Robert."

"Where on earth can he be?"

"I'm givin' him till half past eleven," said Mudd, "and then I'm off to Vine Street."

"What on earth for?"

"To have the hospitals circulated to ask about him."

"Oh, nonsense."

"It's on my mind he's had an accident," said Mudd. "Robbed and stunned, or drugged with opium and left in the street. I know London—and him as he is! He'll be found with his pockets inside out—I know London. You should have got him down to the country to-day, Mr. Robert, somewhere quiet. Now, maybe, it's too late."

"It's very easy to say that. I tried to and he wouldn't go, not even to Richmond. London seems to hold him like a charm. He's like a bee in a bottle—can't escape."

At this moment a horrid little girl in a big hat and feathers, boots too large for her, and a shawl, made her appearance at the entrance door, saw the hall porter, and came toward him. She had a letter in her hand.

The hall porter took the letter, looked at it, and brought it to Mudd.

Mudd glanced at the envelope and tore it open.

10 Duke Street, Leicester Square.

MR. MUDD: Come at once.

CELESTINE ROSSIGNOL.

That was all, written in an angular, old-fashioned hand and in purple ink.

"Where's my hat?" cried Mudd, running about like a decapitated fowl. "Where's my hat—oh, ay, it's upstairs." He vanished, and in a minute reappeared with his hat. Then, with Bobby,

and followed by the dirty little girl, off they started.

They tried to question the little girl on the way, but she knew nothing definite.

The gentleman had been brought 'ome—didn't know what was wrong with him. The lady had given her the letter to take; that was all she knew.

"He's alive, anyhow," said Bobby.

"The Lord knows!" said Mudd.

The little girl let them in, with a key and, Mudd leading the way, up the stairs they went.

Mudd knocked at the door of the sitting room.

Madame and Cerise were there, quite calm, and evidently waiting. Of Simon there was not a trace.

"Oh, Mr. Modd!" cried the old lady.

"How fortunate you have received my letter. Poor Monsieur Pattigrew is——"

"He ain't dead?" cried Mudd.

No, Simon was not dead. Poor Monsieur Pattigrew and a very big gentleman had arrived over an hour ago. Mr. Pattigrew could not stand. He had been taken ill, the big gentleman had declared.

Such a nice gentleman, who had sat down and cried while Mr. Pattigrew had been placed on the sofa. He had been taken ill in the street. The big gentleman had gone for a doctor but had not yet returned. Mr. Pattigrew had been put to bed. She and the big gentleman had seen to that.

Mr. Pattigrew had recovered consciousness for a moment during this operation, and had produced a number of bank notes. Such a number! She had placed them safely in her desk. It was one of the reasons she had sent so urgently for Mr. Modd.

She produced the notes—a huge sheaf. Mudd took them and examined them dazedly, hundreds and hundreds of pounds' worth of notes. And he had started with only two hundred pounds;

"Why, there's nearly a thousand pounds' worth here," said Mudd.

Bobby's astonishment might have been greater had not his eyes rested, from the first moment of their coming in, on Cerise. Cerise, with parted lips, a heightened color, and the air of a little child at a play, did not quite understand.

She was lovely, French, innocent, lovely as a flower, a new thing in London. He had never seen anything quite like her before. The poverty of the room, uncle Simon, his worries and troubles—all were banished and eased. She was music, and if Saul could have seen her he would have had no need for David.

Had uncle Simon added burglary to knocker snatching; broken into a jeweler's and disposed of his takings to a "fence": committed robbery? All these thoughts strayed over his mind, harmless because of Cerise.

The unfortunate young man, who had fooled so long with girls, had met the girl who had been waiting for him since the beginning of the world. There is always that. She may be blowsy; she may be plain or lovely like Cerise; she is Fate.

"And here is the big gentleman's card," said madame, taking a visiting card from her desk, then another and another.

"He gave me three."

Mudd handed the card to Bobby, who read:

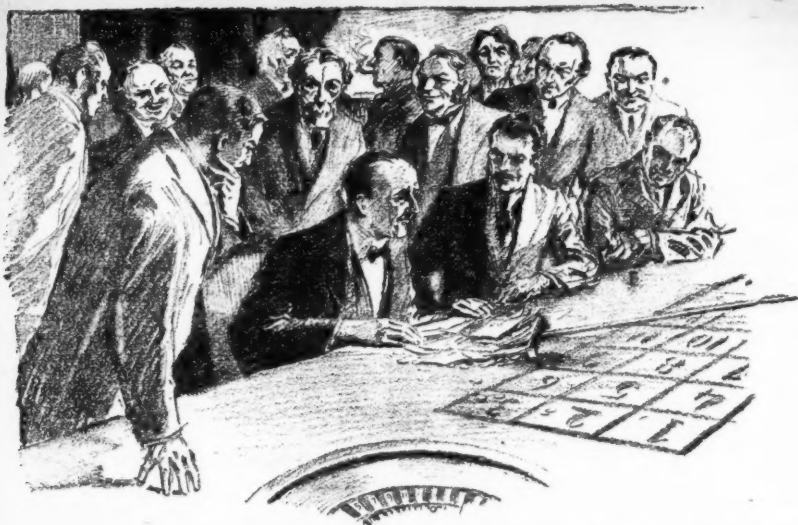
THE HON. RICHARD PUGEOT,
Pall Mall Place, St. James'.
Guards' Club.

"I know him," said Bobby. "*That's* all right. Uncle Simon couldn't have fallen into better hands."

"Is, then, Monsieur Pattigrew your uncle?" asked the old lady.

"He is, madame."

"Then you are thrice welcome here, monsieur," said she.



Pugeot played and lost and then Simon plunged. They were there an hour, and in that hour Simon won seven hundred pounds.

Cerise looked the words, and Bobby's eyes as they met hers returned thanks.

"Come," said madame. "You shall see him and that he is safe."

She gently opened the door leading to the bedroom and there, in a little bed, dainty and white, Cerise's little bed, lay uncle Simon, flushed and smiling and snoring.

"Poor Monsieur Pattigrew," murmured the old lady.

Then they withdrew.

It seemed that there was another bed to be got in the house of Cerise; and Mudd taking charge of the patient, the ladies withdrew. It was agreed that no doctor was wanted. It was also agreed between Bobby and Mudd that the hotel was impossible after this.

"We must get him away to the country to-morrow," said Mudd, "if he'll go."

"He'll go if I have to take him tied up and bound," said Bobby. "My nerves won't stand another day of this.

Take care of those notes, Mudd, and don't let him see them. They'll be useful getting him away. I'll be round as early as I can. I'll see Pugeot and get the rights of the matter from him. Good night."

Off he went. In the street he paused for a moment, then he took a passing taxi for the Albany.

Tozer was in, playing patience and smoking. He did not interrupt his game for the other.

"Well, how's uncle Simon?" asked Tozer.

"He's asleep at last after a most rampageous day."

"You look pretty sober."

"Don't mention it," said Bobby, going to a case and helping himself to some whisky. "My nerves are all unstrung."

"Trailing after him?"

"Thank God, no!" said Bobby.

"Waiting for him to turn up dead, bruised, battered, or simply intoxicated and stripped of his money. He gave

me the slip in Piccadilly with two hundred-pound notes in his pocket. The next place I find him was half an hour ago in a young lady's bed, dead to the world, smiling, and with nearly a thousand pounds in bank notes which he'd hived somehow during the day."

"A thousand pounds!"

"Yes, and he'd started with only two hundred."

"I say!" said Tozer, forgetting his cards. "What a chap he must have been when he *was* young!"

"When he *was* young, Lord! I don't want to see him any younger than he is. If this is youth, give me old age!"

"You'll get it fast enough," said Tozer, "don't you worry, and this will be a reminder to you to keep old. There's an Arab proverb that says: 'There are two things colder than ice, an old young man and a young old man.'"

"Colder than ice!" said Bobby. "I wish you had five minutes with uncle Simon."

"But who's this lady—this young and——"

"Two of the nicest people on earth," said Bobby. "An old lady and her daughter—French. He saved the girl in an omnibus accident or something, in one of his escapades, and took her home to her mother. Then, to-night, he must have remembered them and got a friend to take him there. Fancy the cheek! What made him, in his state, able to remember them?"

"What is the young lady like?"

"She's beautiful," said Bobby. Then he took a sip of whisky and soda and failed to meet Tozer's eye as he put down the glass.

"That's what made him remember her," said Tozer.

Bobby laughed.

"It's no laughing matter," said the other, "at his age—when the heart is young."

Bobby laughed again.

"Bobby," said Tozer, "beware of that girl!"

"I'm not thinking of the girl," said Bobby. "I'm thinking how on earth the old man——"

"The youth you mean."

"Got all that money."

"You're a liar," said Tozer. "You are thinking of the girl."

CHAPTER XIII.

"Higgs!" cried the Honorable Richard Pugeot.

"Sir?" answered a voice from behind the silk curtains cutting off the dressing and bathroom from the bedroom.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Just gone eight, sir."

"Get me some soda water."

"Yes, sir."

The Honorable Richard lay still.

Higgs, a clean-shaven and smart-looking young man, appeared with a bottle of Schweppes and a tumbler on a salver. The cork popped and the sufferer drank.

"What o'clock did I come home?"

"After twelve, sir—pretty nigh one."

"Was there any one with me?"

"No, sir."

"No old gentleman?"

"No, sir."

"Was Randall there?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the car?"

"Yes, sir."

"There was no old gentleman in the car?"

"No, sir."

"Good heavens!" said Pugeot. "What can I have done with him?"

Higgs, not knowing, said nothing, moving about now, putting things in order and getting his master's bath ready.

"I've lost an old gentleman, Higgs," said Pugeot, for Higgs was a confidential servant as well as a valet.

"Indeed, sir," said Higgs, as if losing old gentlemen were as common as losing umbrellas.

"And the whole business is so funny I can scarcely believe it's true. I haven't a touch of the jimjams, have I, Higgs?"

"Lord, sir, no! You're all right."

"Am I? See here, Higgs: yesterday morning I met old Mr. Simon Pettigrew, the lawyer. Mind, you are to say nothing about this to any one—but stay a moment, go into the sitting room and fetch me 'Who's Who'."

Higgs fetched the book.

"Pettigrew, Simon," read out Pugeot, with the book resting on his knees. "Justice of the Peace for Herts—President of the United Law Society—Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries—h'm, h'm—Club Athenæum—well, I met the old gentleman in Piccadilly; we went for a spin together, and the last thing I remember was seeing him chasing a stableman round some inn yard, where we had stopped for petrol or whisky or something, chasing him round with a bucket, trying to put the bucket over the stableman's head."

"Fresh," said Higgs.

"As you say, fresh—but I want to know, was that an optical illusion? There were other things, too. If it wasn't an optical illusion, I want to know what has become of the old gentleman. I'm nervous, for he did me a good turn once, and I hope to Heaven I haven't let him in for any bother."

"Well, sir," said Higgs, "I wouldn't worry. It was only his little lark and most likely he's home safe by this."

"I have also a recollection of two ladies that got mixed up in the affair," went on the other, "but who they were I can't say. Little lark! The bother of it is, Higgs, one can't play little larks like that, safely, if one is a highly respectable person and a J. P. and a member of the what's-it's-name society."

He got up and tubbed and dressed, greatly troubled in his mind. People sucked into the Simon whirl were generally troubled in their minds, so great is the power of high respectability when linked to the follies of youth.

At breakfast Mr. Robert Ravenshaw's card was presented by Higgs.

"Show him in," said Pugeot.

"Hullo, Ravenshaw," said Pugeot. "Glad to see you. Have you had breakfast?"

"Yes, thanks. I only called for a moment to see you about my uncle."

"Which uncle?"

"Pettigrew."

"Good heavens! Don't say he's——"

Bobby explained. It was like a millstone removed from Pugeot's neck. Then he, in his turn, explained. Then Bobby went into details. Then they consulted.

"You can't get him out of London without telling him where you are taking him to," said Pugeot. "He'll kick the car over on the road if he's anything like what he was last night. Leave it to me and I'll do the trick. But the question is, where shall we take him. There's no use going to a place like Brighton—too many attractions for him. A moated grange is what he wants, and even then he'll be tumbling into the moat."

"I know of a place," said Bobby, "down at Upton-on-Hill. A girl told me of it; it's the Rose Hotel."

"I know it," said Pugeot. "Couldn't be better! I have a cousin there living at a place called The Nook. There's a bowling green at the hotel and a golf course near. Can't hurt himself. Leave it all to me."

He told Higgs to telephone for the car and then they sat and smoked while Pugeot showed Bobby just the way to deal with people of uncle Simon's description.

"It's all nonsense—that doctor man's talk!" said Pugeot. "The poor old

chap has shed a nut or two. I ought to know something about it, for I've had the same bother in my family. Got his youth back—pish! Cracked—that's the real name for it. I've seen it. I've seen my own uncle, when he was seventy, get his youth back, and the last time I saw him he was pulling a toy elephant along with a string. He'd got a taste, also, for playing with matches. Is that the car, Higgs? Come along, and let's try a little gentle persuasion."

When they arrived, Simon was finishing breakfast, assisted by madame and Cerise. Poor Monsieur Pattigrew did not seem in the least in the need of pity, either, though the women hung about him as women hang about an invalid. He was talking and laughing, and he greeted the newcomers as good companions who had just turned up. His geniality was not to be denied, and it struck Bobby, in a weird sort of manner, that uncle Simon like this was a much pleasanter person than the old, original article—that is to say, for a moment out of danger from the vicious grinding wheels of a city that destroys butterflies and a society that requests respectable old solicitors to remain respectable old solicitors, Simon was a jovial companion.

Then, the women having discreetly retired for a while, Pugeot began his gentle persuasion.

Uncle Simon, without visions of yesterday's rural pleasures in his mind, required no persuasion. He would come for a run into the country with pleasure. But Pugeot was not taking that sort of thing on any more; he was gay, but a very little of that sort of gayety sufficed him for a long time.

"I don't mean that," said he. "I mean, let's go down and stay for a while quietly at some place—I mean you and Ravenshaw here—for business will oblige me to come back to town."

"No, thanks," said Simon. "I'm quite happy in London."

"But think how nice it will be in the country this weather," said Bobby. "London's so hot."

"I like it hot," said Simon. "Weather can't be too hot for me."

Then the gentle persuaders alternately began offering inducements—bowling, golf, a jolly bar at a hotel they knew, even girls. They might just as well have been offering buns to the lions of Trafalgar Square.

Then Bobby had an idea and, leaving the room, he had a conference on the stairs with Madame Rossignol and Cerise.

Then, leaving Simon to the women for a while, they went for a walk and returned to find the marble wax.

Simon did not mind a few days in the country if the ladies would come as his guests. He was enthusiastic on the subject now. They would all go and have a jolly time in the country. The old poetical instinct that had not shown itself, up to this, restrained, no doubt, by the mesmerism of London, seemed to be awakening and promising new developments.

Bobby did not care. Poetry or a Pickford's van were all the same to him as long as they got Simon out of London.

He had promised Julia Delyse, if you remember, to see her that day, but he had quite forgotten her for the moment.

CHAPTER XIV.

She hadn't forgotten him.

Julia, with her hair down, in an *eau de Nile* morning wrapper, and frying bacon over a Duplex oil stove, was not lovely, though, indeed, few of us are lovely in the early morning. She had started the flat before she was famous. It was a bachelor girl's flat where the bachelor girl was supposed to do her own cooking as far as breakfast and tea were concerned. Money coming in, Julia had refurnished the flat and requisitioned the part-time service of a maid.

Like the doctors of Harley Street who share houses, she shared the services of the maid with another flat dweller, the maid coming to Julia after three o'clock to tidy up and to bring in afternoon tea and admit callers. She was quite well enough off to have employed a whole maid, but she was careful—her publishers could have told you that.

Breakfast over and cleared away, Julia, with her hair still down, set to work at the table before a pile of papers and account books. Never could you have imagined her the Julia of the other evening discoursing on literature with Bobby.

She employed no literary agent, being that rare thing, a writer with an instinct for business. When you see vast publishing houses and opulent publishers rolling in their motor cars, you behold an optical illusion. What you see, or rather what you ought to see, is a host of writers without the instinct for business.

Julia, seated before her papers and turning them over in search of a letter, came just now upon the first letter she had ever received from a publisher—a very curt, businesslike communication, saying that the publisher thought he saw his way to the publishing of her manuscript entitled: "The World at the Gate," and requesting an interview. With it was tied, as a sort of curiosity, the agreement which she had not signed.

It gave—or would have given—the publisher the copyright and half the American, serial, dramatic, and other rights. It offered ten per cent on the published price of all copies sold *after* the first five hundred copies; it stipulated that she should give him the next four novels on the same terms, as an inducement to advertise the book properly, and it had drawn from Julia the prompt reply: "Send the typescript of my novel back *at once*."

So ended the first lesson.

Then, heartened by his evidently good opinion of her work, she had gone to another publisher. She had joined the Society of Authors, an act as necessary to the making of a successful author as baptism to the making of a Christian. She had studied the publishing tribe, its ways and its works; discovered that they had no more love for books than grocers have for potatoes, and that such a love, should it be exhibited, was unhealthy, for no seller of commodities ought to love the commodities he sells.

Arrived at the great, impudently advertising, roaring, trading firm that dealt with books as men deal with goods in bulk and, interviewing the manager as man to man, she had driven her bargain, and a good one, too. These people published poets and men of sciences—but they respected Julia.

Free of creative work this morning, she could give her full attention to accounts and so forth. She turned to a little book which she sometimes scribbled in, the contents of which she had a vague idea of some time publishing under a pseudonym. It was entitled "Never," and it was not poetry. It was a thumb book for authors, made up of paragraphs, some long, some short.

"Never dine with a publisher—luncheon is even worse."

"Never give free copies of books to friends or lend them. The given book is not valued, the lent book is always lost—besides, the booksellers and lending libraries are your real friends."

"Never lower your price."

"Never attempt to raise your public."

"Never argue with a critic."

"Never be elated with good reviews, or depressed by bad reviews, or enraged by base reviews—the public is your reviewer. *It* knows," and so on.

She shut the book, having included:

"Never give a plot away."

Then she did her hair and thought of Bobby. He had not fixed what hour he would call. That was a clause in the agreement which she had forgotten—she, who was so careful about agreements, too.

She dressed and sat down to read De Maupassant and smoke a cigarette. At luncheon time she went to the restaurant below stairs, and then returned to the flat.

Tea time came and no Bobby. She felt piqued, put on her hat and, as the mountain would not come to Mohammed, Mohammed determined to go to the mountain. Her memory held his address—care of Tozer, 12B, the Albany.

She walked to the Albany, arriving there a little after five o'clock. Tozer was in and he opened the door himself. "Is Mr. Ravenshaw at home?" asked Julia.

"No," said Tozer, "he's away. Gone to the country."

"Gone to the country?"

"Yes, he went to-day."

Tozer had at once spotted Julia as the lady of the plot. He was as unconventional as she and he wanted further acquaintance with this fascinator of his protégé.

"I think we are almost mutual acquaintances," said he. "Won't you come in? My name is Tozer, and Ravenshaw is my best friend. I'd like to talk to you about him. Won't you come in?"

"Certainly," said the other. "My name is Delyse—I dare say you know it."

"I know it well," said Tozer.

"I don't mean by my books," said Julia, taking her seat in the comfortable sitting room, "but from Mr. Ravenshaw."

"From both," said Tozer. "And what I want to see is Ravenshaw's name as well known as yours, some

day. Bobby has been a spendthrift with his time and he has lots of cleverness."

"Lots," said Julia.

Tozer, who had a keen eye for character, had passed Julia as a sensible person—he had never seen her in one of her love fits, and she was a lady. Just the person to look after Bobby.

"He has gone down to the country to-day with an old gentleman, his uncle."

"I know all about him," said Julia.

"Bobby has told you, then?"

"Yes."

"About the attack of youth?"

"Yes."

"Well, a whole family party of them went off in a motor car to-day. Bobby called here for his luggage and I went into Vigo Street and saw them off."

"How do you mean, a family party?"

"The youthful old gentleman and a big blond man and Bobby and an old lady and a pretty girl."

Julia swallowed slightly.

"Relations?"

"No, French, I think, the ladies were. Quite nice people, I believe, though poor. The old gentleman had picked them up in some of his wanderings."

"Bob—Mr. Ravenshaw promised to see me to-day," said Julia. "We are engaged—I speak quite frankly—at least, as good as engaged. You can understand."

"Quite."

"He ought to have let me know," said she broodingly.

"He ought."

"Have they gone to Upton-on-Hill, do you know?"

"They have. The Rose Hotel."

Julia thought for a while. Then she got up to go.

"If you want my opinion," said Tozer, "I think the whole lot want looking after. They seemed quite a pleasant party, but responsibility seemed somewhat absent. The old lady,

charming though she was, seemed to me scarcely enough ballast for so much youth."

"I understand," said Julia. Then she went off and Tozer lit a pipe.

The pretty young French girl was troubling him. She had charmed even him, and he knew Bobby, and his wisdom indicated that a penniless beauty was not the first rung of the ladder to success in life.

Julia, on the other hand, was solid. So he thought.

CHAPTER XV.

Upton-on-Hill stands on a hogback of land running north and south, timbered with pines mostly, and commanding a view of half Wessex—not the Wessex of Thomas Hardy, however. You can see seven church spires from Upton and the Roman road takes it in its sweep, becomes the Upton High Street for a moment, and passes on to be the Roman road again, leading to the Downs and the distant sea.

It is a restful place, and in spring the shouting of the birds and the measured call of the cuckoo fill the village, mixing with the voice of the ever-talking pine trees. In summer Upton sleeps among roses, in an atmosphere of sunlight and drowsiness, sung to by the bees and the birds. The Rose Hotel stands, set back from the High Street, in its own grounds, and beside the Rose there are two other houses for refreshment, the Bricklayers' Arms and the Saracen's Head, of which more hereafter.

It is a pleasant place as well as a restful one. Passing through it, people say: "Oh, what a dream"; living in it, one is driven at last to admit there are dreams and dreams. It is not the place that forces this conviction, but the people.

Just as the Roman road narrows at the beginning of the High Street, so the life of a stranger coming, say

from London, narrows at the beginning of his or her residence in Upton. If you are a villager, you find yourself under a microscope, with three hundred eyes at the eyepiece. If you are a genteel person but without introductions, you find yourself the target of half a score of telescopes leveled at you by the residents.

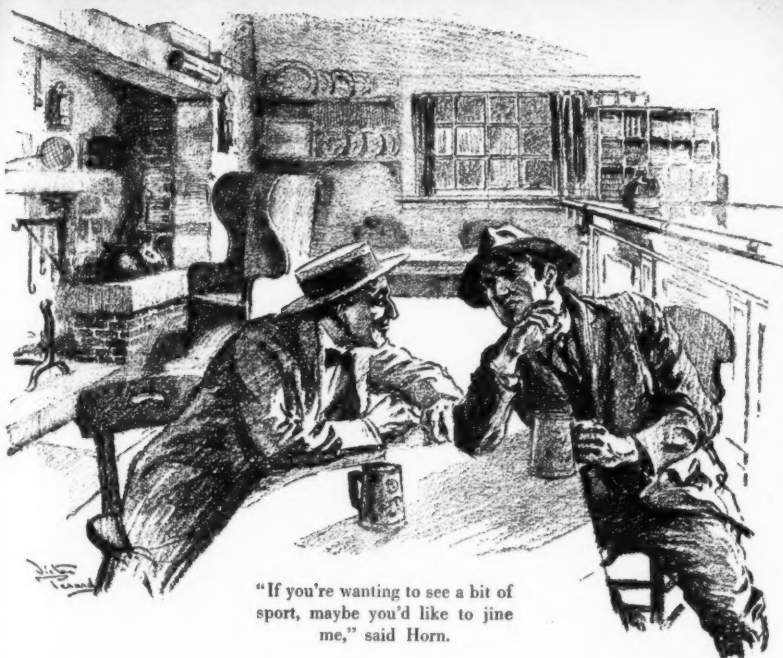
Colonel Salmon, who owned the fishing rights of the trout stream below hill, the Talbot Tomsons, the Griffith Smiths, the Grosvenor Joneses and the rest—all these, failing introductions, you will find to be passive registers to your presence.

Now, caution toward strangers and snobbishness are two different things. The Uptonians are snobbish because, though you may be beautiful as a dream or innocent as a saint, you will be sniffed at and turned over; but if you are wealthy it is another matter, as in the case of the Smyth-Smyths, who were neither beautiful nor innocent—but that is another story.

"The village is a mile farther on," said Pugeot. "Let's turn down here before we go to the hotel and have afternoon tea with my cousin. Randall, steer for The Nook."

The car was not the Dragon Fly, but a huge closed limousine with Mudd seated beside Randall, and inside the rest of that social menagerie, about to be landed on the residents of Upton, upon the landing stage of the social position of Dick Pugeot's cousin, Sir Squire Simpson. All the introductions in the world could not be better than the personal introduction to the resident of Upton, by the Honorable Richard Pugeot.

They passed lodge gates and then went up a pleasant drive to a big house front before which a small garden party seemed to be going on. A big afternoon tea it was, and there were men in flannels and girls in summer frocks,



"If you're wanting to see a bit of sport, maybe you'd like to jine me," said Horn.

and discarded tennis racquets lying about, and the sight of all this gave Bobby a horrible turn.

Uncle Simon had been very quiet during the journey, happy, but quiet, squeezed between the two women, but this was not the sort of place he wanted to land uncle Simon in, despite his quietude and happiness. Mudd, evidently, also had qualms, for he kept looking back through the glass front of the car, evidently trying to catch Bobby's eye.

But there was no turning back.

The car swept along the drive, past the party on the lawn, and drew up at the front door. Then, as they bundled out, a tall old man, without a hat and dressed in gray tweed, detached himself from the lawn crowd and came toward them.

This was Sir Squire Simpson, Bart.

His head was dome-shaped and he had heavy eyelids that reminded one of half-closed shutters, and a face that seemed carved from old ivory, an extremely serious-looking person and stately. He was glad to see Pugeot and he advanced with a hand outstretched and the ghost of an old-fashioned sort of smile.

"I've brought some friends down to stay at the hotel," said Pugeot, "and I thought we would drop in here for tea, first. Didn't expect to find a party."

"Delighted," said the squire.

He was introduced to "My friend, Mr. Pettigrew, Madame—er—de Rossignol, Mademoiselle de Rossignol, Mr. Ravenshaw."

Then the party, moving toward the lawn, were all introduced to Lady Simpson, a harmless-looking individual who welcomed them, distributed them among her guests, and gave them tea.

Bobby, detaching himself for a moment from the charms of Miss Squire Simpson, managed to get hold of Pugeot.

"I say," said he, "don't you think this may be a bit too much for uncle?"

"Oh, he's all right," said Pugeot. "Can't come to any harm here. Look at him, he's quite happy."

Simon seemed happy enough, talking to a dowager-looking woman and drinking his tea, but Bobby was not happy. It all seemed wrong, somehow, and he abused Pugeot in his heart. Pugeot had said himself that a moated grange was the proper place for uncle Simon and that even then he might tumble into the moat, and now, with the splendid inconsequence of his nature, he had tumbled him into this whirl of local society. This was not seclusion in the country. Why, some of these people might, by chance, be Simon's clients.

But there was no use in troubling, and he could do nothing but watch and hope. He noticed that the womenfolk had evidently taken up with Cerise and her mother, and he could not but wonder vaguely how it would have been if they could have seen the rooms in Duke Street, Leicester Square, and the picture of uncle Simon, tucked up and snoring in Cerise's little bed.

The tennis began again and Bobby, firmly pinned by Miss Squire Simpson—she was a plain girl—had to sit watching a game and trying to talk.

The fact that madame and Cerise were French had evidently condoned their want of that touch in dress which makes for style. They were being led about and shown things by their hostess.

Uncle Simon had vanished toward the rose garden, at the back of the house, in company with a female—she seemed elderly. Bobby hoped for the best.

"Are you down here for long?" asked Miss Squire Simpson.

"Not very long, I think," replied he. "We may be here a month or so—it all depends on my uncle's health."

"That gentleman you came with?"

"Yes."

"He seems awfully jolly."

"Yes, but he suffers from insomnia."

"Then he'll get lots of sleep here," said she. "Oh, do tell me the name of that pretty girl who came with you. I never can catch a name when I am introduced to a person."

"A Miss Rossignol—she's a friend of uncle's, and French."

"And the dear old lady is her mother, I suppose?"

"Yes, she writes books."

"An authoress."

"Yes—at least, I believe she translates books. She is awfully clever."

"Well played!" cried Miss Squire Simpson, breaking from the subject into an ecstasy, at a stroke made by one of the flanneled fools. Then, resuming:

"She *must* be clever! And are you all staying here together?"

"Yes, at the Rose Hotel."

"You will find it a dear little place," said she, unconscious of any *double entendre*, "and you will get lots of tennis down here. Do you fish?"

"A little."

"Then you must make up to Colonel Salmon. That's he at the nets. He owns the best trout stream about here."

Bobby looked at Colonel Salmon, a stout, red-faced man, with a head that resembled somewhat the head of a salmon—a salmon with a high sense of its own importance.

Pugeot came along, smoking a cigarette. Some of the people began to go. The big limousine reappeared from the back premises with Mudd and the luggage, and Pugeot began to collect his party. Simon reappeared with the elderly lady. They were both smiling and he had evidently done no harm—

it would have been better, perhaps, if he had, right at the start. The French ladies were recaptured and as they bundled into the car, quite a bevy of residents surrounded the door, bidding them good-by for the present.

"Remember, you must come and see my roses," said Mrs. Fisher-Fisher. "Don't bother about formality. Just drop in, all of you."

"You'll find Anderson stopping at the hotel. He's quite a nice fellow," cried Sir Squire Simpson. "So long—so long!"

"Are they not charming?" said old Madame Rossignol, whose face was slightly flushed with the good time she had been having. "And the beautiful house—and the beautiful garden!"

She had not seen a garden for years. Verily, Simon was a good fairy, as far as the Rossignols were concerned.

They drew up at the Rose Hotel. A vast, clambering vine of wistaria shadowed the hall door. The landlord came out to meet them. Pugeot had telegraphed for rooms. He knew Pugeot, and his reception of the party spoke of the fact.

The Rossignols were shown to their room where their luggage, such as it was, had been carried before them. It was a big bedroom with chintz hangings and a floor with hills and valleys in it. It had black oak beams, and the window opened on the garden.

The old lady sat down.

"How happy I am!" said she. "Does it not seem like a dream, *ma fée*?"

"It is like heaven!" said Cerise, kissing her.

CHAPTER XVI.

"No, sir," said Mudd, "he don't take scarcely anything in the bar of the hotel, but he was sitting last night till closing time in the Bricklayers' Arms."

"Oh, that's where he was!" said Bobby. "How did you find out?"

"Well, sir," said Mudd, "I was in

there myself, in the parlor, having a drop of hot water and gin, with a bit of lemon in it. It's a decent house and the servants' room in this hotel don't please me, nor Mr. Anderson's man. I was sitting there smoking my pipe when in he came to the bar outside. I heard his voice. Down he sits and talks quite friendly with the folk there and orders a pint of beer all round. Quite affable and friendly."

"Well, there's no harm in that," said Bobby. "I've often done the same in a country inn. Did he stick to beer?"

"He did," said Mudd grimly. "He'd got that ten-pound note I was fool enough to let him have. Yes, he stuck to beer, and so did the chaps he was treating."

"The funny thing is," said Bobby, "that though he knows we have his money—and, begad, there's nearly eleven thousand of it!—he doesn't kick at our having taken it, but comes to you for money, like a schoolboy."

"That's what he is," said Mudd. "It's my belief, Mr. Robert, that he's getting younger and younger. He's artful as a child after sweets. He knows we're looking after him, I believe, and he doesn't mind, for it's part of his amusement to give us the slip. Well, as I was saying, there he sat, talking away, and all these village chaps listening to him as if he was the Sultan of Turkey laying down the law. That's what pleased him. He likes being the middle of everything, and as the beer went down the talk went up—till he was telling them he'd been at the battle of Waterloo."

"Good Lord!"

"They didn't know no different," said Mudd, "but it made me crawl to listen to him."

"The bother is," said Bobby, "that we are dealing not only with a young man, but with the sort of young man who was young forty years ago. That's our trouble, Mudd. We can't calcu-

late on what he'll do because we haven't the data, and another bother is that his foolishness seems to have increased by being bottled so long—like old beer. But he can't come to harm with the villagers; they're an innocent lot."

"Are they?" said Mudd. "One of the chaps he was talking to was a gal-lows-looking chap. Horn's his name, and a poacher he is, I believe. Then there's the blacksmith and a squint-eyed chap that calls himself a butcher. The pair of *them* aren't up to much. Innocent lot! Why, if you had the stories Mr. Anderson's man has told me about this village, the hair would rise on your head. Why, London's a girls' school to these country villages, if all's true one hears. No, Mr. Robert, he wants looking after here more than anywhere, and it seems to me the only person who has any real hold on him is the young lady."

"Miss Rossignol?"

"Yes, Mr. Robert, he's gone on her, in his foolish way, and she can twist him round her finger like a child. When he's with her he's a different person; out of sight of her he's another man."

"Look here, Mudd," said the other. "He can't be in love with her, for there's not a girl he sees he doesn't cast his eye after."

"Maybe," said Mudd, "but when he's with her he's in love with her. I've been watching him and I know. He worships her, I believe, and if she wasn't so sensible I'd be afraid of it. It's a blessing he came across here; she's the only hold on him, and a good hold she is."

"It is a blessing," said Bobby. Then, after a pause, "Mudd, you've always been a good friend of mine, and this business has made me know what you really are. I'm bothered about something. I'm in love with her myself—there, you have it."

"With Miss Rossignol?"

"Yes."

"Well, you might choose worse," said Mudd.

"But that's not all," said Bobby. "There's another girl. Mudd, I've been a damn fool."

"We've all been fools in our time," said Mudd.

"I know, but it's jolly unpleasant when one's follies come home to roost on one. She's a nice girl enough, is Miss Delyse, but I don't care for her. Yet, somehow, I've got mixed up with her—not exactly engaged, but very near it. It all happened in a moment, and she's coming down here. I had a letter from her this morning."

"Oh, Lord!" said Mudd. "Another mixture! As if there wasn't enough of us in the business!"

"That's a good name for it—business. I feel as if I was helping to run a sort of beastly factory—a mad sort of show where we're trying to condense folly and make it consume its own smoke—an illicit whisky still—for we're trying to hide our business all the time, and it gives me the jimjams to think that at any moment a client may turn up and see him like that. I feel sometimes, Mudd, as fellows must feel when they have the police after them."

"Don't talk of the police," said Mudd. "The very word gives me the shivers. When is she coming, Mr. Robert?"

"Miss Delyse? She's coming by the three-fifteen train to-day to Ditching-ham station, and I've got to meet her. I've just booked her a room here—you see how I am tied. If I was here alone she couldn't come, because it wouldn't be proper, but having *him* here makes it proper."

"Have you told her the state he's in?"

"Yes, she doesn't mind. She said she wished every one else was the same. She said it was beautiful."

They were talking in Bobby's room, which overlooked the garden of the

hotel and, glancing out of the window now, he saw Cerise. He detached himself from Mudd. He reached her as she was passing through the little rambler-roofed alley that leads from the garden to the bowling green. There is an arbor in the garden, tucked away in a corner, and there is an arbor close to the bowling green; there are several other arbors, for the hotel planner was an expert in his work, but these are the only two arbors that have to do with our story.

Bobby caught up with the girl before she had reached the green, and they walked together toward it, chatting as young people only can chat with life and gayety about nothing. They were astonishingly well matched in mind. Minds have colors, just like eyes. There are black minds and brown minds and muddy-colored minds and gray minds and blue minds. Bobby's was a blue mind; though, needed, it sometimes almost seemed green. Cerise's was blue, a happy blue, like the blue of her eyes.

They had been two and a half days now in pretty close propinquity, and had got to know each other well despite uncle Simon, or rather, perhaps, because of him. They discussed him freely and without reserve, and they were discussing him now as the following extraordinary conversation will show.

"He's good, as you say," said Bobby, "but he's more trouble to me than a child."

Said Cerise: "Shall I tell you a little secret?"

"Yes."

"You will promise me surely, most surely, you will never tell my little secret?"

"I swear."

"He is in loff with me. I thought it was *maman*, but it is me!" A ripple of laughter, that caught the echo of the bowling alley, followed this confession.

"Last night he said to me before dinner: 'Cerise, I loff you.'"

"And what did you say?"

"Then the dinner gong rang," said Cerise, "and I said, 'Oh, Monsieur Pattigrew, I must run and change my dress.' Then I ran off. I did not want to change my dress, but I did want to change the conversation," finished Cerise. Then, with a smile, "He loffs me more than any of the other girls."

"Why, how do you know he loves other girls?"

"I have seen him look at girls," said Cerise. "He likes all the world, but girls he likes most."

"Are you in love with him, Cerise?" asked Bobby with a grin.

"Yes," said Cerise candidly. "Who could help?"

"How much are you in love with him, Cerise?"

"I would walk to London for him without my shoes," said Cerise.

"Well, that's something," said Bobby. "Come into this little arbor, Cerise, and let's sit down. You don't mind my smoking?"

"Not one bit."

"It's good to have any one love one like that," said he, lighting a cigarette.

"He draws it from me," said Cerise.

"Well, I must say he's more likable as he is than as he was. You should have seen him before he got young, Cerise."

"He was always good," said she, as though speaking from sure knowledge. "Always good and kind and sweet!"

"He managed to hide it," said Bobby.

"Ah, yes—maybe so. There are many old gentlemen who seem rough and not nice, and then underneath it is different."

"How would you like to marry uncle?" asked Bobby, laughing.

"If he were young outside as he is

young inside of him—why, then I do not know, I might—I might not."

Then the unfortunate young man, forgetting all things, even the approaching Julia, let his voice fall half a tone. He wandered from uncle Simon into the question of the beauty of the roses.

The conversation flagged a bit. He was holding one of her fingers. Then came steps on the gravel. A servant.

"The fly is ready to take you to the station, sir."

It was three o'clock.

The conveyance was a cross between a hansom cab and a "growler," with the voice of the latter, and the dust of the Ditchingham road, with the prospect of a three-mile drive to meet Julia and a three-mile drive back again, did not fill Bobby with joy—nor did the prospect of having to make explanations.

He had quite determined on that. After the arbor business it was impossible to go on with Julia. He had to break whatever bonds there existed between them, and he had to do the business before she got to the hotel. Then came the prospect of having to live with her in the hotel, even for a night. He questioned himself, asking himself whether he were a cad or not; whether he had trifled with Julia. As far as memory went, they had both trifled with one another. It was a sudden affair and no actual promise had been made. He had not even said: "I love you"—but he *had* kissed her. The legal mind would, no doubt, have construed that into a declaration of affection, but Bobby's mind was not legal, anything but, and as for kissing a girl, if he had been forced to marry all the girls he had kissed, he would have been forced to live in Utah.

He had to wait half an hour for the train at Ditchingham, and when it drew up, out stepped Julia, hot and dressed in green, dragging a hold-all and a bundle of magazines and newspapers.

"H'are you?" said Bobby, as they shook hands.

"Hot," said Julia.

"Isn't it?"

He carried the hold-all to the fly and a porter followed with a basket-work portmanteau. When the luggage was stowed in, they got in and the fly moved off.

Julia was not in a passionate mood; no person is or ever has been, after a journey on the London and Wessex and South Coast Railway—unless it is a mood of passion against the railway. She seemed, indeed, disgruntled and critical, and a tone of complaint in her voice cheered up Bobby.

"I know, it's an awful old fly," said he, "but it's the best they had. The hotel motor car is broken down or something."

"Why didn't you wire me that day," said she, "that you were going off so soon. I only got your wire from here next morning. You promised to meet me and you never turned up. I went to the Albany to see whether you were in and I saw Mr. Tozer. He said you had gone off with half a dozen people in a car."

"Only four, not including me," cut in Bobby.

"Two ladies."

"An old French lady and her daughter."

"Well, that's two ladies, isn't it?"

"I suppose so—you can't make it three. Then there was uncle; it's true he's a host in himself."

"How's he going on?"

"Splendidly."

"I'm very anxious to see him," said Julia. "It's so seldom one meets any one really original in this life. Most people are copies of others, and generally bad ones, at that."

"That's so," said Bobby.

"How's the novel going on?" said Julia.

"Heavens!" said Bobby, "do you

think I can add literary work to my other distractions? The novel is not going on, but the plot is."

"How d'you mean?"

"Uncle Simon. I've got the beginning and middle of a novel in him, but I haven't got the end."

"You are going to put him in a book?"

"I wish to goodness I could, and close the covers on him! No, I'm going to weave him into a story. He's doing most of the weaving, but that's a detail—look here, Julia——"

"Yes."

"I've been thinking."

"Yes."

"I've been thinking we have made a mistake."

"Who?"

"Well, we. I didn't write. I thought I'd wait till I saw you."

"How d'you mean?" said Julia dryly.

"Us."

"Yes?"

"Well, you know what I mean. It's just this way—people do foolish things on the spur of the moment."

"What have we done foolish?"

"We haven't done anything foolish, only I think we were in too great a hurry."

"How?"

"Oh, you know—that evening at your flat."

"Oh!"

"Yes."

"You mean to say you don't care for me any more?"

"Oh, it's not that. I care for you very much."

"Say it at once," said Julia. "You care for me as a sister."

"Well, that's about it," said Bobby.

Julia was silent and only the voice of the fly filled the air. Then she said: "It's just as well to know where one is."

"Are you angry?"

"Not a bit."

IO

He glanced at her.

"Not a bit. You have met some one else—why not say so?"

"I have," said Bobby. "You know quite well, Julia, one can't help these things."

"I don't know anything about 'these things,' as you call them. I only know that you have ceased to care for me—let that suffice."

She was very calm, and a feeling came to Bobby that she did not care so very deeply for him. It was not a pleasant feeling, somehow, although it gave him relief. He had expected her to weep or fly out in a temper, but she was quite calm and ordinary. He almost felt like making love to her again to see if she *had* cared for him, but fortunately this feeling passed.

"We'll be friends," said he.

"Absolutely," said Julia. "How could a little thing like that spoil friendship?"

Was she jesting with him or in earnest? Bitter or just herself?

"Is she staying at the hotel?" asked she after a moment's silence.

"She is," said Bobby.

"It's the French girl?"

"How did you guess that?"

"I knew."

"When?"

"When you explained them and began with the old lady. But the old lady will, no doubt, have her turn next, and to the next girl you'll explain them beginning with the girl."

Bobby felt very hot and uncomfortable.

"Now you're angry with me," said he.

"Not a bit."

"Well, let's be friends."

"Absolutely—I could never fancy you as the enemy of any one but yourself."

Bobby wasn't enjoying the drive, and there was a mile more of it—uphill, mostly.

"I think I'll get out and give the poor



Simon had laughed when Bobby had caught him with Julia. He did not laugh now.

old horse a chance," said he. "These hills are beastly for it."

He got out and walked by the fly, glancing occasionally at the silhouette of Julia, who seemed ruminating matters.

He was beginning to feel now that he had done her an injury, and she had said nothing about going back to-morrow or anything like that, and he was held as by a vise, and Cerise and he would be under the microscope, and Cerise knew nothing about Julia.

Then he got into the fly again, and five minutes later they drove up at the Rose. Simon was standing on the porch as they drove up. His straw hat was on the back of his head and he had a cigar in his mouth.

He looked at Bobby and Julia and grinned slightly. It seemed, suddenly, to have got into his head that Bobby had been fetching a sweetheart as well as a young lady from the station. It

had, in fact, and things that got into Simon's youthful head in this fashion were difficult to remove.

CHAPTER XVII.

Simon had been that day, all alone, to see Mrs. Fisher-Fisher's roses. He said so at dinner that night. He had remembered the general invitation and had taken it, evidently, as a personal one. Bobby did not inquire details. His mind was occupied at that dinner table, where Cerise was constantly seeking his glance and where Julia sat watching—brooding and watching and talking chiefly to Simon.

She and Simon seemed to get on well together, and a close observer might have fancied that Simon was attracted, perhaps less by her charms than by the fact that he considered her Bobby's girl and was making to cut Bobby out, in a mild way, by his own superior attractions.

After dinner Simon forgot her. He had other business on hand. He had not dressed for dinner; he was simply and elegantly attired in the blue-serge suit he had worn in London. Taking his straw hat and lighting a cigar, he left the others and, having strolled round the garden for a few minutes, left the hotel premises and strolled down the street.

The street was deserted. He reached the Bricklayers' Arms and, having admired the view for a while from the porch of that hostelry, strolled into the bar.

The love of low company, which is sometimes a distinguishing feature of the youthful, comes from several causes—a taste for dubious sport, a kicking against restraint, simply the love of low company, or a kind of megalomania, and a wish to be first person in the company present, a wish easily satisfied at the cost of a few pounds.

In Simon's case it was probably a compound of the lot. In the bar of the Bricklayers' Arms he was first person by a mile, and this evening, owing to hay-harvest work, he was first by twenty miles, for the only occupant of the bar was Dick Horn.

Horn, as before hinted by Mudd, was a very dubious character. In old days he would have been a poacher pure and simple; to-day he was that and other things as well. Socialism had touched him. He desired not only other man's game and fish, but their houses and furniture.

He was six feet two, very thin, with lantern jaws and a dark look, suggestive of Romany antecedents—a most fascinating individual to the philosopher, the police, and those members of the public of artistic leanings. He was seated, smoking, and in company of a brown mug of beer when Simon came in.

They gave each other good evening, then Simon rapped with a half crown

on the counter, ordered some beer for himself, had Horn's mug replenished, and sat down. The landlord, having served them, left them together and they fell into talk on the weather.

"Yes," said Horn, "it's fine enough for them that like it. Weather's no account to me. I'm used to weather."

"So am I," said Simon.

"Gentlefolk don't know what weather is," said Horn. "They can take it or leave it. It's the pore that knows what weather is."

They agreed on this point.

After a while Horn got up, craned his head round the bar partition to see that no one was listening, and sat down again.

"You remember what I said to you about them night lines?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm going to set some to-night down in the river below."

"By Jove!" said Simon, vastly interested.

"If you're waiting to see a bit of sport, maybe you'd like to jine me," said Horn.

For a moment Simon held back, playing with this idea; then he succumbed.

"I'm with you," said he.

"The keeper's away at Ditchin'ham that minds this bit of the stream," said Horn. "Not that it matters, for he ain't no good, and the constable's no more than a blind horse, but he's away and we'll have the place proper to ourselves, and you said you was anxious to see how night linin' was done. Well, you'll see it, if you come along with me. Mind you, it's not every gentleman I'd take on a job like this! But you're different. Mind you, they'd call this poachin', some of them blistered magistrits, and I'm takin' a risk lettin' you into it."

"I'll say nothing," said Simon.

"It's a risk all the same," said Horn.

"I'll pay you," said Simon.

"Aff a quid?"

"Yes, here it is. What time do you start?"

"Not for two hours," said Horn. "My bit of a place is below hill there. Y'know the Ditchin'ham road?"

"Yes."

"Well, it's that shack down there on the right of the road before it jines the village. I've got the lines there and all. You walk down there in two hours' time and you'll find me at the gate."

"I'll come," said Simon.

Then these two worthies parted, Horn, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, saying he had to see a man about some ferrets. Simon walking back to the hotel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The head of a big office or business house can not move out of his orbit without creating perturbations. Brownlow, the head clerk and second in command of the Pettigrew business, was to learn this fact to his cost.

Brownlow was a man of forty-five whose habits and ideas seemed regulated by clockwork. He lived at Hampstead with his wife and three children and went each day to the office. That was the summary of his life as read by an outsider. Often the bald statement covers everything. It almost did in the case of Brownlow. He had no initiative. He kept things together; he was absolutely perfect in routine; he had a profound knowledge of the law; he was correct, a good husband and a good father; but he had no initiative and, outside of the law, very little knowledge of the world.

Imagine this correct gentleman, then, seated at his desk on the morning of the day after that on which Simon made his poaching arrangements with Horn. He was turning over some papers when Balls, the third in command, came in. Balls was young and wore eyeglasses and had ambitions. He and

Brownlow were old friends and when together talked as equals.

"I've had that James man just in to see me," said Balls. "Same old game—wanted to see Pettigrew. He knows I have the whole thread of the case in my hands, but that's nothing to him. He wants to see Pettigrew."

"I know," said Brownlow. "I've had the same bother. They *will* see the head."

"When's he back?" asked Balls.

"I don't know," said Brownlow.

"Where's he gone?"

"I don't know," said Brownlow. "I only know he's gone, same as this time last year. He was a month away then."

"Oh, Lord!" said Balls, who had only joined the office nine months before and who knew nothing of last year's escapade. "A month more of this sort of bother—a month!"

"Yes," said Brownlow. "I had it to do last year, and he left no address, same as now." Then, after a moment's pause, "I'm worried about him. I can't help it. There was a strange thing happened last year. I've never told it to a soul before. He called me in one day to his room and he showed me a bundle of bank notes. 'See here, Brownlow,' said he, 'did you put these in my safe?' I'd never seen the things before and I have no key to his private safe. I told him I hadn't. He showed me the notes, ten thousand pounds' worth. Ten thousand pounds' worth, he couldn't account for. Asked me if I'd put them in his safe and I said 'no,' as I told you. 'Well, it's very strange,' said he. Then he stood looking at the floor. Then he said all of a sudden: 'It doesn't matter.' Next day he went off on a month's holiday, sending word for me to carry on."

"Queer," said Balls.

"More than queer!" replied Brownlow. "I've put it down to mental strain. He's a hard worker."

"It's not mental strain," said Balls.

"He's alive as you or me and as keen, and he doesn't overwork. It's something else."

"Well, I wish it would stop," said Brownlow, "for I'm nearly worried to death with clients writing to see him and trying to invent excuses, and my work is doubled."

"So's mine," said Balls. He went out and Brownlow continued his business. He had not been engaged on it for long when Morgan, the office boy, appeared.

"Mr. Tidd, sir, to see Mr. Pettigrew."

"Show him in," said Brownlow.

A moment later Mr. Tidd appeared.

Mr. Tidd was a small, slight, old-maidish man. He walked lightly, like a bird, and carried a tall hat with a black band in one hand and a tightly folded umbrella in the other. Incidentally he was one of Pettigrew's best clients.

"Good morning," said Mr. Tidd. "I've called to see Mr. Pettigrew with regard to those papers."

"Oh, yes," said Brownlow. "Sit down, Mr. Tidd. Those papers—Mr. Pettigrew has been considering them."

"Is not Mr. Pettigrew in?"

"No, Mr. Tidd, he's not in just at present."

"When is he likely to return?"

"Well, that's doubtful. He has left me in charge."

The end of Mr. Tidd's nose moved uneasily.

"You are in charge of my case?"

"Yes, of the whole business."

"I can speak confidentially?"

"Absolutely."

"Well, I have decided to stop proceedings—in fact, I am caught in a hole."

"Oh!"

"Yes. Mrs. Renshaw has, in some illicit manner, got a document with my signature attached—a very grave document. This is strictly between ourselves."

"Strictly."

"And she threatens to use it against me."

"Yes?"

"To use it against me, unless I return to her at once the letter of hers which I put in Mr. Pettigrew's keeping."

"Oh!"

"Yes. She is a violent and very vicious woman. I have not slept all night. I live, as you perhaps know, at Hitchin, and I took the first train I could conveniently catch to town this morning."

The horrible fact was beginning to dawn on Brownlow that Simon had not brought those papers back to the office. He said nothing; his lips, for a moment, had gone dry.

"How she got hold of that document with my name to it I cannot tell," said Mr. Tidd, "but she will use it against me most certainly, unless I return that letter."

"Perhaps," said Brownlow, recovering himself, "perhaps she is only threatening,—bluffing as they call it."

"Oh, no, she's not," said the other. "If you knew her you would not say that—no, indeed, you would not say that. She is the last woman to threaten what she will not perform. Till that document is in her hands I will not feel safe."

"You must be careful," said Brownlow, fighting for time. "How would it be if I were to see her?"

"Useless," said Mr. Tidd.

"May I ask—"

"Yes."

"Is the document to which your name is attached and which is in her possession—is it—er—detrimental—I mean, plainly, is it likely to do you a grave injury?"

"The document," said Mr. Tidd, "was written by me in a moment of indiscretion to a lady who is not my wife."

"It is a letter."

"Yes, it is a letter."

"I see. Well, Mr. Tidd, your docu-

ment, the one you are anxious to return in exchange for this document, is in the possession of Mr. Pettigrew. It is quite safe."

"Doubtless," said Mr. Tidd, "but I want it in my hands to return it myself to-day."

"I sent it with the other papers to Mr. Pettigrew's private house," said Brownlow, "and he has not yet returned it."

"Oh! but I want it—to-day."

"It's very unfortunate," said Brownlow, "but he's away—and I'm afraid he must have taken the papers with him for consideration."

"Good heavens!" said Tidd. "But if that is so, what am I to do?"

"You can't wait?"

"How can I wait?"

"Dear me, dear me," said Brownlow, almost driven to distraction, "this is very unfortunate!"

Tidd seemed to concur. His lips had become pale. Then he broke out:

"I placed my vital interests in the hands of Mr. Pettigrew and now, at the critical moment, I find this!" said he. "Away! But you must find him—you must find him and find him at once!"

If he had only known what he would find he might have been less eager, perhaps.

"I'll find him if I can," said Brownlow. He rang a bell and, when Morgan appeared he sent for Balls.

"Mr. Balls," said Brownlow with a spasmodic attempt at a wink, "can you not get Mr. Pettigrew's present address?"

Balls understood.

"I'll see," said he. Out he went, returning in a minute.

"I'm sorry I can't," said Balls. "Mr. Pettigrew did not leave his address when he went away."

"Thank you, Mr. Balls," said Brownlow. Then to Tidd, when they were alone, "This is as hard for me as for

you, Mr. Tidd. I can't think what to do."

"We've got to find him," said Tidd.

"Certainly."

"Will he by any chance have left his address at his private house?"

"We can see," said Brownlow. "He has no telephone, but I'll go myself."

"I will go with you," said Tidd. "You understand me, this is a matter of life and death—ruin—my wife—that woman, and the other one."

"I see, I see, I see," said Brownlow, taking his hat from its peg on the wall. "Come with me—we will find him if he is to be found."

He hurried out, followed by the other, and in Fleet Street he managed to get a taxi. They got into it and drove to King Charles Street.

There was a long pause after the knock and then the door opened, disclosing Mrs. Jukes. Brownlow was known to her.

"Mrs. Jukes," said Brownlow, "can you give me Mr. Pettigrew's present address?"

"No, sir, I can't."

"He was called away, was he not?"

"I don't think so, sir. He went off on some business or other. Mudd has gone with him."

"Oh, dear," said Tidd.

"They stopped at the Charing Cross Hotel," said Mrs. Jukes, "and then I had a message they were going into the country. It was from Mr. Mudd and he said they might be a month away."

"A month away," said Tidd, his voice strangely calm.

"Yes, sir."

"Good gracious!" said Brownlow. Then to Tidd, "You see how I am placed."

"A month away," said Tidd. He seemed unable to get over that obstacle of thought.

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Jukes.

They got into the taxi and went to the Charing Cross Hotel, where they

were informed that Mr. Pettigrew was gone and had left no address.

Then suddenly an idea came to Brownlow—Oppenshaw. The doctor might know. Failing the doctor, they were done.

"Come with me," said he. "I think I know a person who may have the address." He got into the taxi again with the other, gave the Harley Street address, and they drove off. The horrible irregularity of the whole of this business was poisoning Brownlow's mind—hunting for the head of a firm who ought to be at his office and who held possession of a client's vitally important document.

He said nothing; neither did Mr. Tidd, who was probably engaged in reviewing the facts of his case and the position his wife would take up when that letter was put into her hands by Mrs. Renshaw.

They stopped at 110A Harley Street.

"Why, it's a doctor's house," said Tidd.

"Yes," said Brownlow.

They knocked at the door and were let in. The servant, in the absence of an appointment, said he would see what he could do and showed them into the waiting room.

"Tell Doctor Oppenshaw it is Mr. Brownlow from Mr. Pettigrew's office," said Brownlow, "on very urgent business."

They took their seats and while Mr. Tidd tried to read a volume of *Punch* upside down, Brownlow bit his nails.

In a marvelously short time the servant returned and asked Mr. Brownlow to step in.

Oppenshaw did not beat about the bush. When he heard what Brownlow wanted he said frankly he did not know where Mr. Pettigrew was; and he only knew that he had been staying at the Charing Cross Hotel. Mudd, the manservant, was with him.

"It's only right that you should know

the position," said Oppenshaw, "since you say you are the chief clerk and all responsibility rests on you in Mr. Pettigrew's absence." Then he explained.

"But if he's like that, where's the use of finding him?" said the horrified Brownlow. "A man with mind disease!"

"More a malady than a disease," put in Oppenshaw.

"Yes, but—like that!"

"Of course," said Oppenshaw, "he may at any moment turn back into himself again, like the finger of a glove turning inside out."

"Perhaps," said the other hopelessly, "but till he does turn——"

At that moment the sound of a telephone bell came from outside.

"Till he does turn, of course, he's useless for business purposes," said Oppenshaw. "He would have no memory, for one thing—at least, no memory of business."

The servant entered.

"Please, sir, an urgent call for you."

"One moment," said Oppenshaw. Out he went.

He was back in less than two minutes.

"I have his address," said he.

"Thank goodness!" said Brownlow.

"H'm," said Oppenshaw, "but there's not good news with it. He's staying at the Rose Hotel, Upton-on-Hill, and he's been getting into trouble of some sort. It was Mudd who phoned and he seemed half off his head. Said he didn't like to go into details over the telephone, but wanted me to come down to arrange matters. I told him it was quite impossible to-day; then he seemed to collapse and cut me off."

"What am I to do?"

"Well, there's only two things to be done: tell this gentleman that Mr. Pettigrew's mind is affected, or take him down there on the chance that this shock may have restored Mr. Pettigrew."

"I can't tell him Mr. Pettigrew's mind is affected," said Brownlow. "I'd sooner do anything than that. I'd sooner take him down there on the chance of his being better. Perhaps even if he's not, the sight of me and Mr. Tidd might recall him to himself."

"Possibly," said Oppenshaw, who was in a hurry and only too glad of any chance of cutting the business short. "Possibly. Anyhow, there is some use in trying, and tell Mudd it's absolutely useless for me to go. I shall be glad to do anything I can by letter or telephone."

Brownlow took up his hat, then he recaptured Tidd, and gave him the cheering news that he had Simon's address.

"I'll go with you myself," said Brownlow. "Of course, the expense will fall on the office. I must send telegrams to the office and my wife to say I won't be back to-night. We can't get to Upton till this evening. We'll have to go as we are, without even waiting to pack a bag."

"That doesn't matter, that doesn't matter," said Tidd.

They were in the street now and bundling into the waiting taxi.

"Victoria Station," said Brownlow to the driver. Then to Tidd, "I can telegraph from the station."

They drove off.

CHAPTER XIX.

"He came back two hours ago, sir, and he was in his room ten minutes ago—but he's gone."

"Well," said Bobby, who was just off to bed, "he'll be back again soon; can't come to much harm here. You'd better sit up for him, Mudd."

Off he went to bed. He lay reading for a while and thinking of Cerise, then he put out the light and dropped off to sleep.

He was awakened by Mudd, who had a candle in his hand.

"He's not back yet, Mr. Robert."

Bobby sat up and rubbed his eyes.

"Not back—oh, uncle Simon! What's the time?"

"Gone one, sir."

"Bother! What can have happened to him, Mudd?"

"That's what I'm asking myself," said Mudd.

A heavy step sounded on the gravel drive in front of the hotel, then came a ring at the bell. Mudd, candle in hand, darted off.

Bobby heard voices down below. Five minutes passed and then Mudd reappeared, ghastly to look at.

"They've took him," said Mudd.

"What?"

"He's been took poachin'."

"Poaching!"

"Colonel Salmon's river—he and a man, and the man's got off. He's at the policeman's house and he says he'll let us have him if we'll go bail for him, seeing he's an old gentleman and only did it for the lark of the thing."

"Thank God!"

"But he'll have to go before the magistrates on We'n'sday whether or no. Before the magistrates—*him!*"

"The devil!" said Bobby. He got up and hurried on some clothes.

"Him before the magistrates—in his present state! *Oh, Lord!*"

"Shut up," said Bobby. His hands were shaking as he put on his things. Pictures of Simon before the magistrates were fleeting before him. Money was the only chance! Could the policeman be bribed?

Hurrying downstairs and outside into the moonlit night, he found the officer. None of the hotel folk had turned out at the ring of the bell. Bobby, in a muted voice and beneath the stars, listened to the tale of the law. Then he tried corruption.

Useless. Constable Copper, though he might be no more good than a blind

horse, according to Horn, was incorruptible yet consolatory.

"It'll only be a couple of quid fine," said he. "Maybe not that, seeing what he is and that it was done for a lark. Horn will get it in the neck, but not him. He's at my house now, and you can have him back if you'll go bail he won't get loose again. He's a nice old gentleman, but a bit peculiar, I think."

Constable Copper seemed quite light-hearted over the matter. He seemed to think little of it as an offense—a couple of quid would cover it. He did not, perhaps, appreciate fully the light and shade of the situation—a J. P. and Member of the Athenæum and of the Society of Antiquaries brought up for poaching in company with an evil character named Horn. Neither did Simon, whom they found seated on the side of the table in the Coppers' sitting room, talking to Mrs. Copper, who was wrapped in a shawl.

He went back to the hotel with them rather silent, but not depressed. He tried, indeed, to talk and laugh over the affair. This was the last straw and Bobby burst out, giving him a "jawing" complete and of the first pattern. Then they saw him to bed and put out the light.

At breakfast he was quite himself again and the summons which arrived at eleven o'clock was not shown to him. No one knew of the affair, with the exception of the whole village, all the hotel servants, Bobby, and Mudd.

The distracted Mudd spent the morning walking about; hither and thither, trying to collect his wits and make a plan. Simon had given his name, of course, though, indeed, it did not matter much, as he was a resident at the hotel. It was impossible to deport him or move him or pretend he was ill. Nothing was possible but the bench of magistrates, Colonel Salmon presiding, and publicity.

At half past eleven or quarter to

twelve Mudd sent the despairing message to Oppenshaw; then he collapsed into a cold sort of resignation, with hot fits at times.

At four o'clock that day a carriage drove up to the hotel and two gentlemen alighted. They were shown into the coffee room and Mudd was sent for. He came, expecting to find police officers, and found Brownlow and Mr. Tidd.

"One moment, Mr. Tidd," said Brownlow. Then he took Mudd outside into the hall.

"He's not fit to be seen," said Mudd, when the other had explained. "No client must see him. He's right enough to look at and speak to, but he's not himself. What made you bring him here, Mr. Brownlow, now of all times?"

The sound of a child screaming in the garden came just then, stabbing the peace of the hotel. It made Brownlow start and turn. Mr. Tidd had opened the door and how much of their conversation he had heard, Heaven knows.

"I will wait no longer," said Mr. Tidd. "This must be explained. Is Mr. Pettigrew here, or is he not? No, I will not wait."

Brownlow tried to get in front of Tidd to round him off from the garden. Mudd tried to take his arm. He pushed them aside.

CHAPTER XX.

We must go back to three o'clock. At three o'clock Bobby, walking in the garden smoking a cigarette, had crossed the front of the arbor—arbor No. 1. The grass path, soundless as a Turkey carpet, did not betray his footsteps.

There were two people in the arbor and they were "cannoodling." They were Simon and Julia Delyse. She was keeping her hand in, perhaps, or the attraction Simon had always had for her had betrayed her into allowing him to hold her hand. Anyhow, he was

holding it. Bobby looked at her and Julia snatched her hand away. Simon laughed. He seemed to think it a good joke, and his vain soul was doubtless pleased with having got the better of Bobby with Bobby's girl.

Bobby passed on, saying: "I beg your pardon." It was the only thing he could think of to say. Then, when out of hearing, he, too, laughed. He had got the better of Julia.

An hour later Simon, walking in the garden alone and in meditation, reached the bowling green. He drew close to arbor No. 2, the grass silencing his footsteps. The two people there did not see him for a moment, then they unlocked. It was Cerise and Bobby.

Simon stood, mouth open, stock-still, and his cigar dropped on to the grass. He had laughed when Bobby had caught him with Julia. He did not laugh now.

The shock of the poaching business had left him untouched, unshaken, but Cerise, in some strange way, was his center of gravity, his compass, and sometimes his rudder. He loved Cerise; the other girls were phantoms. Perhaps Cerise was the only real thing in his mental state.

Then, suddenly he began to scream like a naughty child and as he screamed he seemed to change. It was as if his youth were escaping.

Then he stopped and clapped his hand to his head like a man stunned.

Bobby ran to him and caught him.

"Where am I?" said uncle Simon. "Oh—oh—I see." He leaned heavily on Bobby, looking about him in a dazed way like a man half awakened.

Then Bobby gently, very gently, began to lead him back to the house. As they drew near the back entrance three men, one following the other, came out. Simon stopped. He had recognized Tidd. He seemed also to recognize his own position and to remember.

"Why, this is Mr. Tidd," said Simon. "Mr. Pettigrew," said Tidd, "where are my papers—the papers in the case of Renshaw?"

"Tidd vs. Renshaw," rehearsed Simon's accurate mind. "They are in the top left-hand drawer of my bureau in King Charles Street, Westminster."

The first and most horrible shock to the recovered Simon was the fact that he had forgotten those papers. The second was his necessary appearance before Colonel Salmon and a full bench of magistrates *with* Horn, who had been captured. The affair was kept out of the papers. The third shock was the fact that he had made seven hundred pounds by gambling. The fourth shock was an attack of gout from too much good living, an attack through which Madame Rossignol nursed him.

He was an older and a wiser Simon when these things had finished with him—a Simon in search of a wife. Oppenshaw insisted on his marrying just as he had insisted on lithia water.

"You will be lost without a wife," said Oppenshaw. And what better wife could he have had than Madame Rossignol? Or Bobby than Cerise?

Bobby told me this little story. He is not hunting for plots now. He does not want it. He has gone into business. Tea. He is very sedate, really reformed, the man of this little tale who found himself, for Simon only found his youth—a thing we all regret, yet a thing, perhaps, better lost.

Julia Delyse is not married yet—or rather only to Fiction, and as for Puget, he drives more slowly through life these days, his license heavily indorsed with the wiggling given him by his relative, Sir Squire Simpson, for "landing on me and the countryside that set of deplorable people. An absolute disgrace, sir, to you, an absolute disgrace!"



Rehabilitated



By Hildegarde Lavender

SHE is fifty-five and the powder lies in the creases of her neck and in the wrinkles about her dulled, disappointed eyes. She wears a transformation of brown above her own gray hair. But these two aids to beauty are the only ones that she employs in her later development. She will not permit her stepdaughters to use lip sticks or rouge, and she fills in the décolletage of their evening gowns with copious bands of tulle. "What do you want to go around exposing yourselves for?" she asks, when they protest. For herself, she has adopted garnet velvet and high-necked guimpes as evening attire, thereby definitely breaking with youth and old recollections.

She is invited once a season to the Loweries' to dinner—Lowerie is her husband's lawyer. The other guests are the Mather Joneses and the Colbys. She is invited once a season to the Reverend Mather Jones', and on the following Sunday the Reverend Mather preaches a sermon on the necessity of forgiving the world's Magdalenes, "because they loved much." At the rectory parties the other guests are the Loweries and the Colbys. She is invited once a season to the Colbys'. Colby is her husband's partner, and Mrs. Colby is, besides, a light-minded woman who says: "Good heavens! Isn't there anything more interesting to do in the world than to dig up buried bones? I don't care what the poor old thing's past was!" The other guests are the Loweries and the Joneses.

Those invitations comprise her social opportunities in our suburb. She seizes upon them with hungry eyes and lips that almost quiver with eternally

frustrated hope. Each time, she is buoyed up by the daring, blissful expectation that there will be some new person to meet her—some of the women with whom she has been working in the Red Cross sewing rooms, some of the women who nod and smile and swiftly evade her at the country club, when she goes out there with her stepdaughters, to oversee their tennis with all-embracing eyes.

She tells her husband, when, sometimes, the fact that his girls are excluded from festivities is brutally apparent, that she is a much better chaperon for them than their aunts. "I know the world," she tells him, "and your sisters know nothing about it. I can keep your girls out of danger. I know men—the devils!"

But the girls spend more and more time with their aunts, and her husband walks with a slower step each month, and she eats out her heart in the bitterness of hope deferred. Her servants are impertinent to her, not too subtly; changing them and quarreling with them are the chief occupations and excitements of her new life.

"Where do they hear the lies about me?" she asks herself angrily. "How am I different from all the rest of the women out here? I ain't, except that I'm a blamed sight more particular. I ain't smoked a cigarette in years, nor touched a glass of liquor. My language is refined. I cut out the rough talk long ago. Where do they get that stuff against me? It's the second time we've moved, too, since we was married. I wonder where we could go where all them old lies wouldn't follow us?"

That Extra Pound of Flesh

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

THE richest food conceivable to-day is childishly simple compared to the extravagant concoctions of former ages. It was early in the first century that Apicius squandered the equivalent of five millions of dollars for the maintenance of his table, and finally poisoned himself lest he starve to death on a remaining million. In the twelfth century the extravagance was so great that the expenditures made to celebrate the nuptials of Elinor and Louis le Jeune nearly exhausted the public treasury. In 1243, at the marriage banquet of Cincia, daughter of Raymond, Comte de Province, to Richard of Cornwall, brother of Henry III of England, thirty thousand dishes were served. Within more modern times and after Paris became the gastronomic center of the fashionable world, a Londoner, on being presented with a bill of fare containing one hundred and ninety dishes, returned it to the waiter saying he had made a mistake and brought a bill of lading!

And yet, in spite of the simple meals in vogue to-day, most of us eat too much, and our physical ailments may often be traced to overfeeding. Vital statistics support this statement. The heaviest mortality is found among those aged forty to forty-four who are fifty per cent overweight! The inherent desire, then, of most women to retain

their youthful figures is not based upon vanity, nor upon an unnatural love of self, but springs, rather, from an intuitive sense of what is fitting as well as pleasing. Health and good looks are twin sisters. Women as a rule enjoy better health than men, and they are known to be longer lived.

Fat is an inert substance. Fat cells do not work. By acting as heavy padding over the surface of the body, less heat radiates, there is less activity, and the body, though actually requiring less fuel, consumes just as much or even more than the average. What is not burned up is stored up as more fat.

We should endeavor to keep our weight at about the average for the age of thirty, the period of full maturity. Investigation and experience show this to be the most favorable. "A lean horse for a long race," is a very homely but very true old adage.

After thirty-five almost every one weighs too much. It is safer to be five pounds below than five pounds above your normal, standard weight. It is easy enough to reduce weight upon a restricted diet alone, but this is a very unwise course to pursue after the body has reached its full stature, while it may be a very dangerous procedure after middle life, because, the system being accustomed to certain dietetic habits over a period of many years,

the sudden withdrawal of an accustomed amount of nutriment, *with nothing to take its place*, may result in an impoverishment of the blood and an enfeeblement of the internal machinery. With this let-down, any latent or dormant trouble is brought into active play. Many have pursued vigorous starvation diets to their sorrow. What, then, is a safe plan for those ambitious to reduce in weight, and yet retain not only a full measure of health, but a trim and well-knit figure?

The answer is a modified diet, daily, systematic exercise, fresh-air breathing, and cold-water bathing. By these means every article of food taken into the system is completely digested and converted into energy.

Fresh-air breathing is essential to life. It has often been pointed out in these pages that oxygen is as necessary to life as food. Indeed, we can subsist for days without food, but only a few moments without oxygen. Most of us do not get enough fresh air. We *manage* to get along with just enough. Every one should walk from two to four miles in the open air every day, breathing deeply the while.

Many muscles in the body are stiff and inert from lack of use. As a rule, corpulent persons allow themselves to "slump." The body is not carried properly and flesh accumulates in the unused regions. The first thing that must be learned is to sit and stand correctly. The weight must be thrown where it belongs. To do this, flatten the abdomen, draw the chest up and out, the shoulders back, and carry the head erect. Practice holding this poise before a mirror. Watch yourself, walk about in your room, note the new lines in your figure, observe the great improvement which a good carriage alone brings about.

Exercise of the entire body stimulates all the processes of the body, especially the circulation, while purposeful fresh-

air breathing enables the blood quickly to replace the poisonous waste—carbon dioxide—with the life-giving oxygen.

In the majority of obesity cases, an entirely new set of habits is the only thing necessary to melt that "too, too solid flesh." If young girls would cultivate these habits and conform to them throughout life, they would never require "reduction cures," and they would enjoy a degree of health little short of marvelous.

Abstinence from one's favorite dishes is not at all essential if all food be masticated to a creamy consistency before swallowing. This little act of thoroughly chewing every morsel of food appeases the appetite quickly, so that less food is required. Also, its creaminess insures speedy digestion with rapid assimilation.

There are some flesh-producing foods which not only burden the system with an oversupply of fat, but which are a serious menace to health. These include all kinds of cakes, bonbons, pastries, creams, and dainty tidbits. Bread should be eaten sparingly, and then only coarse breads, such as gluten, graham, crisp rye, and bran. White-flour breads and butter should never be eaten. Soups and all kinds of table drinks are taboo. Lemonade tends to reduce the weight. Two glassfuls of hot lemonade, taken on arising, are highly recommended. It should be made with one lemon and sweetened with crystallose. Sugar should never be used under any circumstances.

The diet should consist in the main of lean meats, coarse green vegetables, any fruits except bananas, figs, peaches, and grapes. All tart fruits—berries in season, dried fruits cooked without sweetening—are on the favored list. Such vegetables as can be eaten raw are particularly advised. While the list of foods blacklisted is long—including all starches and sugars—the favored list

is even longer and no one need deny himself a delightful variety of appetizing dishes if sufficient thought is given the matter.

Baths are an important item in every antifat program. All sorts and conditions of baths are mentioned in this connection. The very stout can take one or two Turkish baths weekly if the heart permits. A daily hot bath, to which tincture of benzoin or toilet vinegar has been added, is an excellent tonic for the skin, and is necessary to stimulate its contractile power in order to combat the flabbiness so often observed after reducing.

The looseness or bagginess of the tissues must be persistently fought, especially on the face; otherwise years are added to one's appearance. Massage of the face with astringent creams and lotions is an essential part of every obesity cure.

Instead of hot baths, the cold shower, or better still, cold salt-water rubdowns every morning, are strongly advised, because cold abstracts heat, and heat being conducive to fat building, anything that aids in the rapid withdrawal of heat assists in the reduction of fat, while salt is a tonic to the skin and to the nerves. Hot baths do good by causing perspiration and the elimination of waste in this manner.

Abdominal plethora—engorgement—usually accompanies a condition of general obesity. Indeed, it is very often the only region that is affected, the other portions of the body remaining normal. It is very common in women and consists not only in an accumulation of fat, but the abdomen is hard and unyielding as well, due to habitual distention—flatulence. It is caused by lack of exercise and dietetic errors. Unfortunately, those so burdened rarely carry out the directions given them, though painfully conscious of their deformity and desirous of correcting it.

Abdominal massage in the obese is of signal service toward reduction, even when the abdomen itself is not the chief feature requiring treatment. When such is the case, the treatment is, of course, all the more essential. Those suffering from a chronically enlarged, plethoric abdomen very often confine themselves almost entirely to a starchy diet, and the first thing they must do is to deprive themselves of such foods. Fermentation of the intestinal contents must be rigidly guarded against; otherwise nothing will be accomplished. Starches are converted into sugars in the process of digestion, and sugars and ripe, sweet fruits ferment in the intestinal tract.

Massage of the abdomen with a hollow wooden ball filled with shot and weighing about four pounds, is excellent. A flannel case for the ball may be provided. For a quarter of an hour roll the ball from right to left, following the direction of the colon. The weight shifts with the motion of the ball. At the end of the process let the ball fall from a height of about four inches upon different parts of the abdomen, again following the course of the colon.

Massage should be supplemented with gymnastic exercises directed toward strengthening the abdominal and intestinal muscles, the general improvement of the circulation, and the toning up of the whole system. They should consist of exercises without apparatus—bending and stretching the legs, twisting and turning the trunk, quickly drawing up the legs to the abdomen while lying flat upon the back, bending the knees. Of exercises with apparatus the horizontal bar is particularly good. Systematic outdoor sports, such as riding, rowing, and particularly swimming, should be added.

While some persons are inordinately large in the abdomen, others are excessively developed in the bust. A large

bust on a broad, expansive chest is beautiful, but, when out of proportion to the underlying bony framework, it constitutes one of the most trying features with which to contend, for, unlike an enlarged abdomen, a ponderous bust does not yield so readily to treatment. If a general obesity cure is followed, the remaining portions of the body "fade away" before any appreciable effect is made upon the bust.

Exercises especially designed to reduce these parts must be pursued daily with clocklike regularity and precision in order to gain results. Besides this, applications of one kind or another, and the use of a rubber brassiere, will facilitate the process, but at least one year must be given to the treatment, in cases where the bust is out of all proportion to the body's size. Of course, where the trouble is less pronounced, results show more quickly. One thing that must *not* be done—and this cannot be too forcibly impressed upon those seeking treatment for an unusually large bust—is this: *Camphor must not be employed*. One often sees it recommended for this purpose. True, camphor *does* reduce the bust, but it also destroys the glands, so that the breasts shrink away, and after a while the victim is obliged to seek advice to restore her bust. But it cannot be done. Breasts treated with camphor are irretrievably destroyed. Formulas and directions for using a reducing lotion upon the breasts will be mailed to readers interested in the subject.

An exercise to be pursued in this connection is punching the bag. Any object, notably a football, can be suspended from the ceiling and used for this purpose. The more rapidly the bag is punched—using both fists, of course—the more quickly will the operator breathe. This is the object—to exercise the chest muscles and to expand and contract the chest walls, so that the superfluous flesh will be

broken down and the fat cells carried away by the speeding blood—for the circulation is tremendously stimulated. Exercising near an open window will increase the value of this and all other exercises.

While systematic exercise to reduce the body is generally very irksome, for the purpose of reduction nothing exceeds rhythmic gymnastics. Dancing is, of course, the most marked example of the appeal made by rhythmic movements, and physical culturists are making use of this fact in their application of music to physical instruction.

There is no reason why every one, even those disinclined to systematic exercise, should not indulge in rhythmic movements attuned to music. For instance, one who indulges in long-distance walking will find that rhythmic movements of the legs, arms, and trunk can be cultivated by mentally humming a tune and accentuating the body's movements to the time. Thus, if march time is being hummed, mark the beat with an accentuated step; keep time by contracting the muscles of the arms, then of the legs. This contraction and relaxation of the muscles hardens them and crowd out fat cells.

Either one has a *natural* or an *acquired* disposition to roam. We are essentially creatures of habit. Those whose tasks keep them confined to an office or some monotonous occupation, fall into fixed habits and they have little inclination for diversions. Exercise, to be wholesome and beneficial, must be enjoyable. Merely to breathe deeply in God's out-of-doors is a delight, but it is a delight few take sufficient time to appreciate. The average business person buries himself in a newspaper in an overcrowded car on his way to and from business. In our large cities this little journey morning and evening is taken underground. The average worker in the city dives into the nearest "subway" and, after half

an hour of vitiated air, during which he "trains" his eyes in an artificial light upon the fine print of his newspaper, he emerges from the tunnel and, with a few quick strides, reaches his desk and immediately plunges into the business of the day. Unemployed women do not fare much better. When not engaged in endless household tasks, they are prone to shop, a not altogether healthful pursuit.

While systematic exercise is irksome to the majority, walking should not be.

It is the simplest, most natural, and most healthy form of exercise. We should all—properly dressed and shod—walk at least two miles every day, regardless of weather, and as many more miles as is consistent with our daily routine.

NOTE: In the next article special exercises for special needs will be taken up. Meanwhile diet lists, breathing exercises, and the like are available to all readers who write for them, inclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

WHAT READERS ASK

ELKA.—The condition of your skin is due to your intestinal trouble. If you are losing flesh, consult a physician. If not, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a suggestion that may relieve you.

EDITH T.—All hair has a tendency to grow darker with age. Instead of bleaching it, let me send you a tonic wash for light hair, which will prevent your hair from "turning."

SUFFERER.—I am giving you here a remedy that will prove effectual. Lotion for excessive or odorous perspiration: Acetic acid, 8 ounces; oil of lavender, 2 drams; oil of rosemary, 1 dram; oil of cloves, 1 dram; camphor, 1 ounce. Dissolve the camphor in the acetic acid, gradually add the oils. Set the mixture aside for a few days, shaking it frequently; finally filter and bottle it for use.

OVERNIGHT.—By judicious dieting and breathing exercises, you can reduce your weight. This will also aid you to "attain health and beauty." Send to me for diet list and exercises.

INQUIRER.—Yes, there are purely alkaline foods, the use of which alone will overcome hyperacidity. They are: Carrots, turnips, potatoes, onions, milk, blood—you can use this in the form of blood pudding—lemon and orange juice, peas, and beans. If properly prepared, peas and beans do not cause flatulence.

MARY.—You have a form of scalp eczema. Try this: Precipitated sulphur, 5 drams; resorcin, 2 drams; salicylic acid, 80 grains; tincture of benzoin, 1½ drams; petrolatum,

6½ ounces. Shampoo the head, dry thoroughly, then apply this ointment, rubbing it well into the scalp. Repeat every night.

ADELE.—French beauty specialists claim that a few drops of spirits of camphor added to any fatty cream, just as it is applied, will prevent a growth of hair. Let me send you a formula for a greaseless cream.

HOPELESS.—I condemn depilatories because they stimulate the hair and sweat glands to renewed activity. The only treatment that is really curative is electricity in the hands of a competent electrotherapist. Many of my readers have not the time required nor the means for this treatment. For these I advise the wax method of pulling the hairs out with the roots. If you want further information regarding it, send self-addressed, stamped envelope.

M. O. R.—Rub your entire body morning and night with cold salt water applied with fluffa mitts. Rub your body dry with a very coarse towel. Put on some sensible clothing and walk from three to five miles after the morning rubbing. Purposeful breathing is one of the surest means of overcoming an ugly skin and nervous irritability. Let me send you a list of breathing exercises, whereby you will acquire the habit of deep breathing. Then practice this while taking your daily constitutional.

A. M.—The dryness of your throat is undoubtedly caused by the unusual nasal opening. Use, by means of an atomizer, a penetrating liquid spray containing: Menthol, 3 grains; albolene, 1 ounce. You can vary this by using eucalyptol in place of menthol.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



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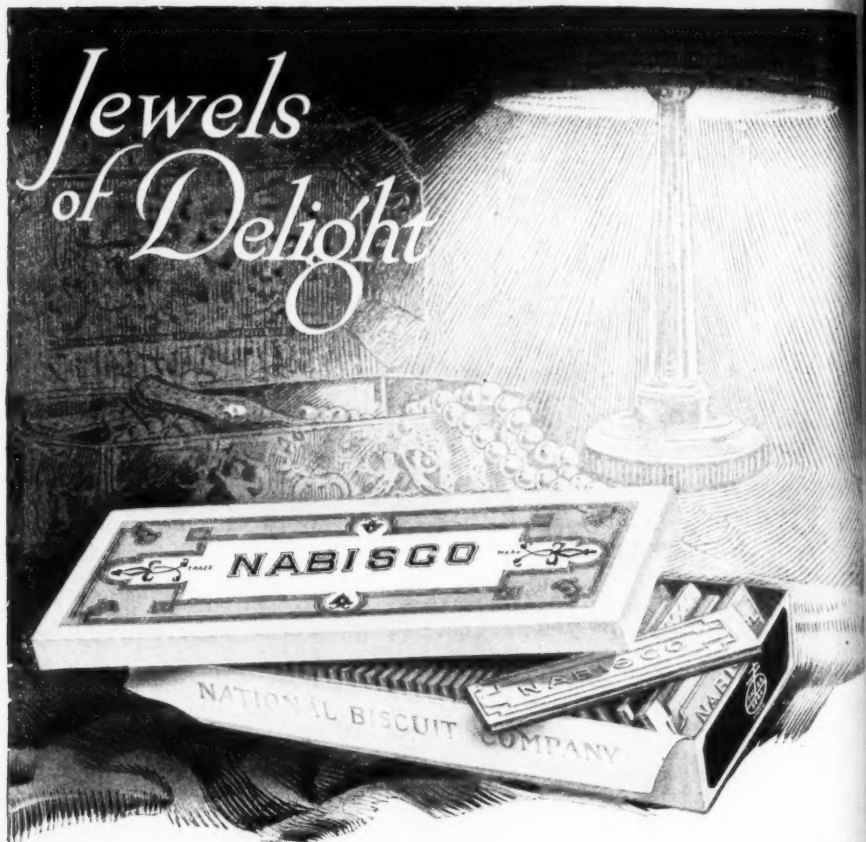
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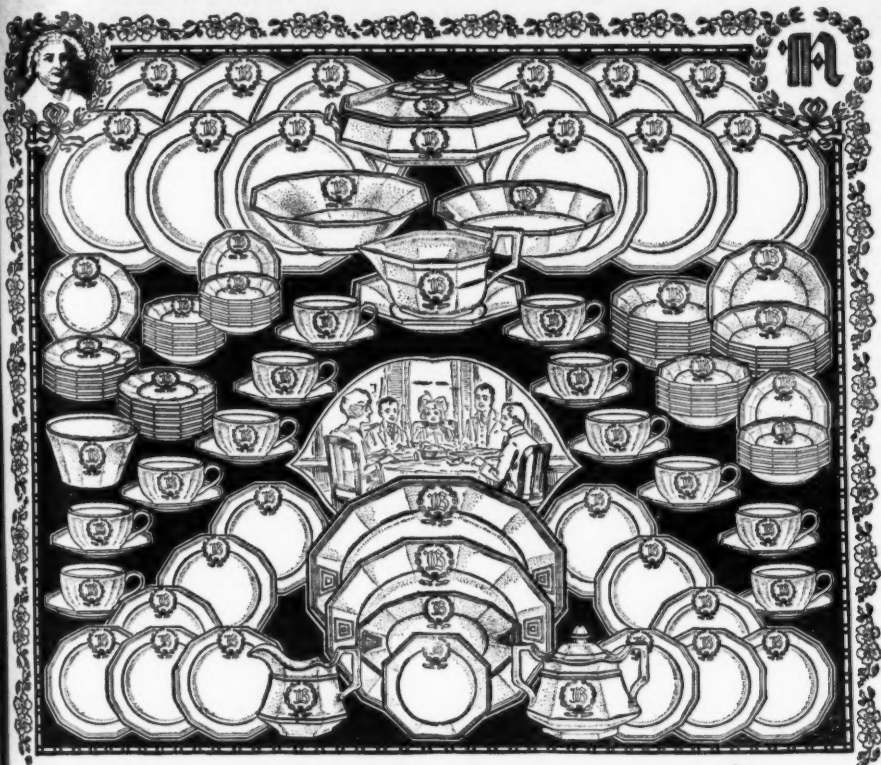
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- Art of Advertising
- Every Training
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- Winning Competition
- Using the Territory
- Words in Expression
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- Logical Argument and Persuasion
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Our Free Employment Service will help you select and secure a good paying selling position just as soon as you are ready to take it. You don't have to wait until you've finished the training—you can earn as you learn. There are opportunities everywhere, and we keep in close touch with the leading manufacturers and wholesalers throughout the country. They know what N. S. T. A. men can do and that is why we are swamped with requests for Salesmen. Why don't you qualify for one of these big jobs?

How to Prove These Statements at My Expense

You don't have to take my word for all this. Just let me send you **Free Proof** of every statement I have made. Simply sign and mail the coupon below. It will bring you "A Knight of the Grip," a fascinating book on Salesmanship and particulars of our Free Employment Service. You will see the actual letters of men who without previous experience have made enviable success through the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training and Employment Service. Don't delay getting this valuable information. It is free for the asking. The mailing of the coupon may change the whole trend of your life. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. So mail the coupon now.

National Salesmen's Training Association
Dept. 4-D, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

National Salesmen's Training Association
Dept. 4-D, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

With no obligation on my part, please send me "The Knight of the Grip" and full information about the N. S. T. A. Training and Employment Service. Also a list showing lines of business with openings for salesmen.

Name.....
Street.....
City..... State.....

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

Drawing Outfit and Drawing Table

FREE



Complete Set of Drawing Instruments and Drawing Table

Yes, I will give you this complete drawing outfit absolutely free. The instruments are in a handsome high class, plush lined folding case. They are regular draftsman's working instruments. Besides I will give you absolutely free, a 20 x 25 inch drawing board, a 24 inch T square, a 12 inch rule, a supply of drawing paper, two triangles, a French curve, pencils, erasers, thumb tacks, etc.

Delivered at Once

The drawing table is the "Chief's Own" adjustable folding Drawing Table, same as used and needed by first class draftsmen. The complete outfit and table are delivered to you at once. You have them to work with from the very first day.

Be a Draftsman

Draw \$175.00 to \$250.00 Per Month

There is an urgent demand for skilled draftsmen. Companies are issuing calls every day for men to fill positions paying from \$175.00 to \$250.00 per month. Work is light, pleasant and profitable.

Chief Draftsman Will Instruct You Personally

I am Chief Draftsman of a large and well known firm. I have been doing the highest paying expert drafting work for a quarter of a century and I know just the kind of training that is demanded from men who get the big salaries. I train you by giving you actual, practical work, the

kind that you must be able to do to hold permanent, big paying positions. I give you my individual instruction. If your work is right, I will advance you rapidly. If it is wrong, I will show you where and make you do it right, and do all I can to make you an expert draftsman and designer in a short time. Write today without fail.

Pay As You Wish What I want is the right kind of men. Don't bother about expense. I will give

you the working outfit free if you get in at once. I charge a very small fee for training you to be an experienced draftsman. You can pay the small cost as suits you best.

Send Coupon for My Big New Book

Put your name and address on the coupon or a letter or a post card and send it to me today. I will send you absolutely free and postpaid, my new book "Successful Draftsmanship," and the great special offer that I am now making on which you get the complete Draftsman's Working Outfit and Drawing Table absolutely free. You assume no obligations of any kind in sending in the coupon. Get in line for a big paying position. Getting the book and full particulars of the special offer is the first step.

CHIEF DRAFTSMAN DOBE
Engineers' Equipment Co., Inc., Dept. 1405, CHICAGO

CHIEF DRAFTSMAN DOBE
Engineers' Equipment Company
Div. 1405 Chicago, Illinois

Without any obligations on me whatsoever, please mail me book "Successful Draftsmanship" and full particulars of liberal "Personal Instruction" offer to a few students. I understand that I am obligated in no way whatever.

Name.....

Address.....



Columbia

BICYCLE



Ride a Bicycle

Don't go on *spending* that good money you could be *saving* by riding a Columbia.

Don't go on *wasting* that good time in delayed trolley schedules you could be saving by riding a Columbia.

Don't go on *crowding* yourself into stuffy cars when you can build *health* and *strength* and ride wherever you want to ride—in solid comfort—on a Columbia.

See the Columbia at your dealer's. Get a close-up of its trim design, its light but rugged build, its ease of operation, its equipment detail, its enduring finish, its thoroughness of construction.

For every member of your family there is a model *just right*. The prices are as moderate as a strictly high-grade bicycle can be sold for.

The 1920 Columbia Catalog pictures and describes all models. Send for it and see your dealer today.

WESTFIELD MANUFACTURING COMPANY

44 Lozier Ave., Westfield, Mass.



Another EVEREADY CONTEST \$10,000⁰⁰ in Cash Prizes



\$3,000 for 12 Words

WHEN Sir A. Conan Doyle was paid a dollar a word he set a record in the history of writing. You may earn **\$250 a word** in the great international Eveready Contest **beginning June 1 and ending August 1, 1920!**

For, beginning May 1st, dealers everywhere throughout the U. S. and Canada will display a remarkable picture in their windows. Study the picture and send in your answer to the question, "What does the letter say?" using twelve words or less.

For the best answer that conforms to the Contest Rules, to be judged by the Art Editors of *LIFE*, **three thousand dollars in cash will be paid.** For the hundred and three next best answers will be paid prizes ranging from \$1,000 down to \$10.

Anyone may enter. There is no cost or obligation of any sort. Contest Rules and special Contest Blanks free, at any of the fifty thousand stores showing the picture. If two or more contestants submit the same identical wording selected by the judges for the awarding of any prize, the full amount of that prize will be paid to each.

The quickest way to find a store showing the Eveready Daylo Contest Picture is to look for the window sign reproduced at the right. Full particulars may be obtained from these dealers.

List of Prizes

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 1 First Prize | \$3000 |
| 1 Second Prize . . . | 1000 |
| 3 prizes, each | 500 |
| 4 prizes, each | 250 |
| 5 prizes, each | 200 |
| 10 prizes, each | 100 |
| 10 prizes, each | 50 |
| 20 prizes, each | 25 |
| 50 prizes, each | 10 |



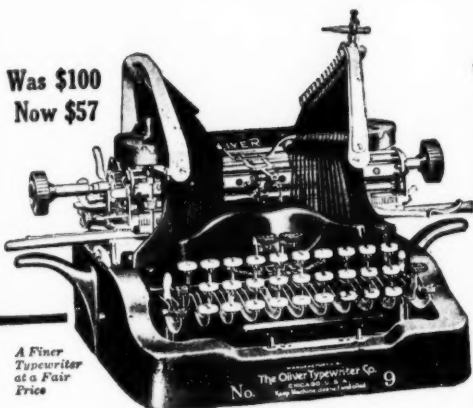
With that long-lived TUNGSTEN Batter

A-3112

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

Was \$100
Now \$57

A Finer
Typewriter
at a Fair
Price



10 [¢]
A
DAY

Buys The New Oliver "9"

A year and a half to pay! Only \$3 a month. Payments so small as to average only about ten cents a day. That is our easy payment plan on the Oliver. And you have the use of the typewriter while you are paying for it. You may now deal direct with The Oliver Typewriter Company and get an Oliver, the latest and finest product of our factories, at a saving of \$43 and on payments so easy that you won't miss the money.

Only \$57 for the \$100 Oliver

A full saving to you of \$43 on the famous Oliver No. 9—our latest and newest model. That is what our new selling plan makes possible. During the war we learned many lessons. We found that it was unnecessary to have such a vast number of traveling salesmen and so many expensive branch houses. We were able to discontinue many other superfluous sales methods. As a result, \$57 now buys the identical Oliver formerly priced at \$100.

Try It Free—Send No Money

Not a cent in advance. No deposit of any kind. No obligation to buy. The coupon is all you need send. The Oliver comes to you at our risk for five days free trial in your own home. Decide for yourself whether you want to buy. If you don't want to keep the Oliver, simply send it back at our expense. If you do agree that it is the finest typewriter, regardless of price, and want to keep it, take a year and a half to pay at the easy rate of only \$3 a month.

Only the Coupon

A real free trial offer. You risk nothing. Fill out and mail the coupon and get the Oliver for free trial. If you should wish further information before requesting a free trial, mark the coupon for free books mentioned therein. Clip and mail the coupon now.

Canadian Price, \$72

The Oliver Typewriter Company
735 Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

67.03

THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER COMPANY

735 Oliver Typewriter Building, Chicago, Ill.

☐ Ship me a new Oliver Nine for five days free inspection. If I keep it, I will pay \$57 at the rate of \$3 per month. The title to remain in you until fully paid for.

My shipping point is _____

This does not place me under any obligation to buy. If I choose to return the Oliver, I will send it back at your expense at the end of 5 days.

☐ Do not send a machine until I order it. Mail me your book—"The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy," your de luxe catalog and further information.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____

Occupation or Business _____

Growing up with COLGATE'S

A wise mother judges not only by height and weight, but by general health. And there the faithful care of the teeth plays a large part. That is why her children grow up with Colgate's—the safe, sane, *delicious* dentifrice. Do yours?

Regular tooth brushing is a treat, not a task, with Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream.

